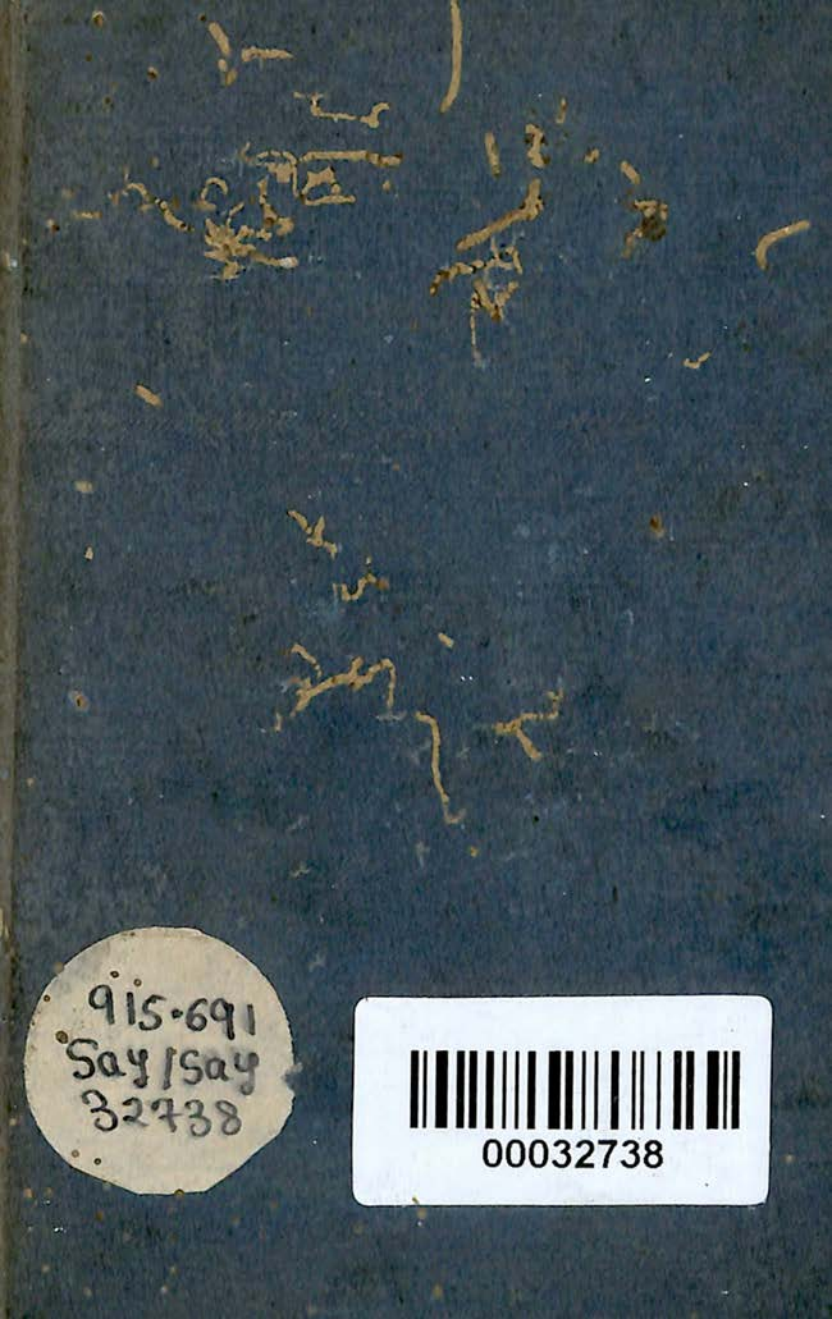
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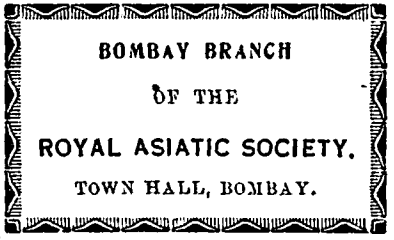

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SAYAH

OR,

THE COURIER TO THE EAST.

32738

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"SOLDIERS AND SAILORS,"
"SPAIN AND THE SEAT OF WAR IN SPAIN,"
"HIGHLAND SPORTS."

ETC. ETC. ETC.

LONDON:
CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193 PICCADILLY.
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TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HON.

VISCOUNT STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE, C.C.B.

AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE SUBLIME OTTOMAN PORTE,

WHOSE LONG-TRIED, TALENTED, AND FAITHFUL

DIPLOMATIC SERVICES,

HAVE ALIKE DONE HONOUR TO HIMSELF

AS TO HIS COUNTRY.

CONSTANTINOPLE,

December 12th, 1855.

SAY-AH.

INTRODUCTION.

Those only who have made several voyages in the French mail steam-packets from Marseilles to Constantinople, can form any just estimate of the number and variety of mere pleasure-seeking travellers who proceed by them to the capital of the East, as to the seat of war. For the most part they are English. It can scarcely be said, however, that they belong to the aristocracy, to the universities, or to the literary or artistical school. Hitherto, they may be fairly classed as members of the public generally, who take advantage of a short period of repose from the labours of life to visit

the Bosphorus and Balaklava, the heights of Inkerman, and the valley of the Tcherneya; from whence, having gathered some relic of the battle-field, if not delayed by fever or cholera, they return to the land we live in somewhat less informed as to the actual position and state of the army than would they have been had they remained at home and read "The Times."

If mere curiosity or novelty, therefore, induces men to risk their lives (for I declare to have heard a tourist assert, that he was so carried forward on the 18th of June as to be in the very midst of carnage), what will it be when Providence judges fit to terminate the war?

It will simply come to this—the French mail-packets will be crammed with tourists hastening to the seat of war; and I doubt not that excursion steamers will be advertised from Southampton as from Marseilles, at a very reasonable outlay, inclusive of the railway fare from Balaklava to the late head-quarters of the Commander-in-Chief, while the Monastery of St.

George, the heights of Inkerman, the Valley of Death, the glorious battle-field of Balaklava, and the city of Sevastopol, will become as well-known localities as Richmond Hill.

It is with the fervent hope that these theories will be soon realised and converted into practical events that I put forth this little volume, for the benefit, I should hope, as far as it goes, alike of those who may be induced to follow my footsteps, as of those who live at home at ease, yet who would gladly, at a small outlay, have some knowledge of the highway which divides them from those friends and relations who have shared, and are still sharing, in the cares and privations of the Crimean campaign.

Into the cottage of the poor I would also hope my humble book may find its way, for there are hearts among them as brave, loyal, and loving, as those which beat for the absent soldier-son in the bosom of the proudest noble.

CHAPTER I.

SEVERAL years since, if I am not in error, the talented author of "Vanity Fair" gave to the public a very graceful and agreeable little book entitled "A Trip from Cornhill to Grand Cairo." I think his route was that by Southampton, and that his object in writing was to the advantage of tourists desirous of visiting Syria and the East. The result was the above-named humorous and instructive little work. At the period of Mr. Thackeray's travels, all the world were comparatively at peace, and had any one suggested the possibility of great and glorious battles being fought, and splendid victories won in the Crimea, in the year 1854, followed by similar battles in '55, he would have been considered insane. But

now, as in days to come, in the present as in future years, the old as the young, the dweller in the palace as the cottage, will doubtless read with interest all connected with the Eastern war. Therefore, while I by no means venture to suppose that I am enabled to convey any of these little brilliant touches of wit and description which so eminently discover themselves in the work to which I have alluded, I have an object in view which may strike home to the hearts of many who follow my footsteps.

It is that of stating facts, and clearing away, insomuch as the brief time allowed me for observation has permitted, the cloud of errors and romances which appear to me still to surround and mystify the public mind as regards the East. In all other respects I should be far better pleased to use my pen, as I have done before, in description of the beauties of my native land.

A generation, however, has grown up to mature age, which has known of battles and

sieges only, from the narratives of their sires and the records of history, to share in the perils, struggles, and sufferings, of a European war. Above one hundred years have elapsed since encountering armies met in this island; nearly half that time since the armies and fleets of Britain left her shores to meet an army in this hemisphere; and it has therefore occurred to me, that to those (and they are legion) who are not actively engaged in the service of their country, yet who are desirous to visit the East, as the seat of war, as not the less to those who seek a speedy mode of gaining the theatre of their duties, the details and anecdotes of the travels of one who has not seldom quitted "the City of the Queen" for "the City of the Sultan" in this era of interest and excitement, may neither be without utility nor interest;—although my route may be said to be a beaten one to those who gather no knowledge by the way-side, as were my journeys of a rapid description.

Quitting London by the mail-train at 8 P.M., Paris is easily gained in twelve hours, from which city an uninterrupted line of railway is now opened to Marseilles — passing by the several important towns of Tonnerre, Dijon, Lyons, and Avignon. Marseilles — a town full of interest and life at this period of the war — more particularly is reached in twenty hours, and no words can well describe the scene which there presents itself. At all times a city of considerable commercial interest—in fact, the Liverpool of France — it has now become the principal port of transport to the East, as the seat of war. Yet while, in the early stage of the war, the large ships and steamers assembled in its crowded harbour, prepared to convey troops, ammunitions, and merchandise of every description for the benefit of the Allied armies, caused alike interest and excitement to him who beheld them; I am free to confess that now to me, at least, the effect is not unaccompanied with

sorrow and regret. During my last visit, the new and magnificent harbour was crowded to excess with ships of all nations and all dimensions, some taking on board troops for the battle-field; others, horses, mules, and ammunition; while many, having just disembarked large cargoes of sick and wounded, were again preparing to embark others, who, in spite of the sufferings of their countrymen, were proceeding full of apparent cheerfulness and hope, again to fill the ranks which the battle-field or disease had made void.

Marseilles is, in fact, at this present hour, a city of no common excitement and stirring life. The hôtels, to-day filled with officers proceeding to join their regiments in the Crimea, speculative merchants whose cargoes have been sent forward by long sea, and travellers to the East, to-morrow are equally filled by those returning homewards. Heat, dust, bustle, and confusion, not unattended with great excitement, prevail

during the long summer's day. Equal bustle and confusion, with mud, and the "mistrail," or north-west wind, that of winter.

Nevertheless, there are few towns in Europe which, at all times and under all circumstances, presents more stirring life, or where men of all nations and all tongues throng together in such commercial enterprise—nine out of every ten you meet having a pipe, cigar, or cigarette, in his mouth—while the Saracen blood is peculiarly delineated on the dark and swarthy Eastern countenances of those who labour for the bread of life under the scorching sun of summer or the searching winds of winter.

Moreover, there are few places, save it be Constantinople, in this hour of fierce contention, where the varied costumes of the passers-by present such varied features. Now comes the European, dressed in all the modifications of the tailor's art. There approaches the fez of a Greek or Levantine—the kilt and embroidered jacket of an Albanian, or the turban and rich

flowing robes of a solemn-looking Turk; the French officer, always in undress uniform, as the English officer, going to, or returning from, the East, with some portion of a heterogeneous dress to denote his calling; and lastly, the observing or idling traveller at his ease, in search of pleasure or information, whose wide-awake and shooting-jacket—in fact, whose attire constitutes, for the most part, all that is comfortable and suitable to the climate and occasion, if so be it cannot be justly termed picturesque or elegant. In fact, the streets of Marseilles offer many a subject worthy of artistical attention. Of the ladies' fair who mingle in this motley throng, I will only add, that their out-door attire presents a variety of colours and apparent richness of texture, the purchase of which must considerably diminish the commercial gains of those whose duty it is to pay for them, and doubtless a sprinkling of these costumes amid those I have named adds greatly to the interest of the picture.

From the heights that rise above the city, and on which, amid groves of olives and other trees that seem, as it were, to spring from a barren rock, are scattered in profusion innumerable white-washed and green-shuttered "bastides," or villas, of the Marseilles citizens. The town itself appears to repose at your feet—the outline of the coast being broken by a regular basin, communicating by a narrow neck with the sea. This basin produced the city. The Greeks of old found out its advantages, and their temples and shrines marked the inlet from the Mediterranean Sea. Old Marsalia flourished like new Marseilles. The harbour was, and is, its heart; the salt-water, its life's blood. It is strange and peculiar to observe the singular contrast formed by the dusty gray of the houses and the deep blue of this inland patch of sea. The ocean is in the very centre of the town, the buildings fence it in and encircle it. It lies as if sleeping in their embrace — perhaps

the only instance of a great city built round and round, with one small opening excepted.

Of the surrounding country I can only say: Behold hills, all rocks and dust, hard, hot, glaring, parched in summer;—in winter bare, barren, and bleak. All round and about Marseilles they rise. All along the sea-coast you observe them gleaming and flashing in the bright scorching air; not, however, ever without green,—sombre, unpleasing, and unrefreshing though it be to the eye. Yet if the land be dark, burnt, and barren, to look on, what a splendid contrast presents itself in the glorious ocean, pencilled in the purest azure, so profound as to become almost imperial purple! Descend once more into the city—observe the old harbour as the new. They were alike harbours and cesspools—all the drainings of the vastly-populated city originally poured into them; in the former, such has been the case for ages. And as no tide stirs the Mediter-

rancan, there it lay, and rotted, and stagnated, and from thence it spread fever, pestilence, and death.

No wonder, then, that cholera should so often have smitten the city with a strong and blighting hand. Yet, beyond what were horrid lakes of pestilence, the breeze comes dancing freely over the ocean, (at times too freely for those who are about to embark on its troubled waters,) and the waves are as pure as salt-water waves can be. Graceful feluccas skim over the waters, bending under their striped canvass; while steamers of all nations, and men-of-war, cluster on the sea. All is life, and motion, and varied colouring. The forests of masts, the deep blue of the sea, and the bright blue of the sky, seen under favourable circumstances, form altogether a picture never to be forgotten.

I feel it right to observe, that the brief remarks which I have here made in reference to Marseilles, for the most part grounded on personal observation, are nevertheless blended with re-

collections of a very agreeable and truthful article which long since I have read, but by whom written I cannot at the moment recollect. And I should not be just did I not add, that great and varied improvements have, and are now being carried out, as regards the sanitary state of the city. The whole of the infectious substance, heretofore allowed to collect in the streets till it rotted and was carried off by the violent rains into the harbours, is now daily collected and removed to the country for agricultural purposes. The new harbour, of considerable dimensions, to which I have alluded, has been recently completed; and the drainage has been so greatly improved as no longer to allow stagnation or pestilence to remain: for which the citizens cannot be too thankful or cheerfully taxed.

Arrived at Marseilles, the traveller who desires to visit Constantinople and the seat of war has two routes for selection—the one by the way of Messina to the Piræus and thence to the

Dardanelles; the other, unquestionably the most interesting for those to whom time is no object, by Malta, Syra, Smyrna, Mytelene, to the same point. In either case the Straits of Bonafacio are passed, which divide the interesting islands of Corsica and Sardinia. Twice during each week steamers leave for Constantinople, the one on Monday at 4 A.M., the other on Thursday at 4 P.M.—the former by the route of Messina, the latter by that of Malta. The whole of the above boats are the property of a company, entitled the "Messagerie Impériale," and are under government contract to convey the mails to the several places *en route* to the seat of war. They perform the voyage (weather, of course, permitting) at an average rate of ten knots an hour. Thus, the Monday's boat generally reaches Constantinople at day-break on the Tuesday week, frequently on Monday night, and that of Thursday at the same hour on Saturday week. Their advantages are thus set forth: —

"Tous les navires sont de première force, d'une très-grand solidité et d'une marché rapide.

"La table y est servie avec recherché et abondance. Ils ont chacun abord un équipage nombreux et des domestiques en suffisant pour le service des passages. "Les imménagements sont beaux spécieux, et de nature à assurer aux voyageurs tout la comfort désirable."

I am bound to say, in all fairness, there is far more truth in this public declaration than is generally found in similar advertisements. Considering the great demand which the war has called forth for large and powerful steamers, those of the Messagerie Impériale, built principally in England, and purchased in haste, are really, for the most part, what they are declared to be, of great force, rapidity, and comfort. There are, however, exceptions, and I have, to my cost, most unpleasantly suffered in all ways, when it has chanced that duty has compelled me to take passage therein. Nevertheless, the bad boats are in the minority, the good ones in the

majority. If I were to select or recommend any for choice, I should unquestionably name the "Gauge," the "Thabor," "Carmel," "Euphrates," or "Sinai," if they have changed their *restaurateurs*. There are others, however, equally good. The "Pericles" and "Caire" I should unquestionably avoid, if circumstances or choice permitted a selection; not that there is any great fault to be found with the boats, though the great exigencies of the period, and the great demand on the docks at Toulon, as Malta, compel the company to keep a vessel not seldom on the station which absolutely requires repair. Moreover, I should be very far from desiring to say one word which might appear as calling forth censure on those whose duty it is on all occasions, with utter disregard of self, to provide for the care as well as the comfort of those who submit themselves to their care and nautical knowledge on the perilous ocean.

The commissariat, as the cookery, on board these boats, varies: for those, however, to whom

the hours for gastronomic indulgences set forth are agreeable, as for those who prefer the French system of satisfying the inward man, there is little fault to be found. At the hour of nine the first bell is rung for breakfast, and at half-past nine, if the sea be calm, the muster is generally tolerably strong. A slight description of these repasts may afford some trifling amusement. In England, a fresh egg and a good cup of *café au lait*, or tea with milk, would be justly considered a fit breakfast for an Emperor; but such a breakfast is by no means that offered to your notice on board the steamers of the Messageric Impériale.

Each morning the long table of the saloon is spread with a dessert, consisting of apples, raisins, oranges, almonds, cakes, and bonbons, in abundance, the fruit according to the season; intermixed with dishes of pickles, olives, sardines, anchovies, having a pleasing effect to the eye, if not to the digestion; while between each person and his neighbour appears a bottle of bad *vin ordi-*

naire, or light claret. Various dishes are then handed round, consisting of omelettes, côtelettes, hashes, and not seldom roast legs of mutton, with various vegetables. Then the dessert, hitherto only looked at, is demolished, followed by a strong cup of coffee and a *chassé* for those who desire it. Tea and eggs are also occasionally to be had if demanded, being an exception to the general rule.

The dinner, which is served at half-past five, differs in few respects from the breakfast, save that a table-cloth invariably covers the mahogany (not always the case as regards the breakfast), while the dishes are more numerous and varied, soup invariably commencing the repast; in due season, not seldom followed with ripe figs or melons. In fact, the gastronomic arrangements, in most of the boats unquestionably, but not in all, are as complete as can be reasonably expected. Turkeys, fowls, and woodcocks, notoriously cheap in the Levant, in season are never absent from the table—all had of their kind.

These gastronomic undertakings—for by such name alone can I term them—are distressingly fatiguing as regards the inconceivable time they kill; by no means undesirable to many during the monotony of a voyage, but destructive alike to hot dishes, which are looked at while they cool, and still more destructive to the patience of Englishmen, who prefer the onslaught on a grill or a cold ham, and are satisfied.

CHAPTER II.

In company with six hundred French troops, belonging to various regiments of the line, as also fifty gens d'armes, remarkably fine men, for the first time I left the harbour of Marseilles for the East, at five o'clock on a fine afternoon of January last. Numerous persons were assembled to watch the departure of our vessel with its cargo of gallant soldiers. A perfect silence, however, seemed to reign throughout the throng: not a cheer was heard, not a hat lifted, not a voice to nerve the warriors on their way to the seat of war; a fashion, I conclude, not national, yet singular, nevertheless, for an Englishman to witness. Yet it is possible there were among that throng hearts that felt as truly and as warmly for those who were

departing—many, perhaps, never to return—as among our own more practical people. However, among the soldiers, with many of whom I conversed, there appeared nothing of sorrow, hope, or anticipation. No words of regret escaped their lips at bidding adieu to home and country. I saw no wives or families of soldiers. Happily, the rules of the French army allow no female followers in the camp, save the *cantinières*, who, women though they be, and not seldom most worthy ones, are soldiers at heart, even to the battle-field. Our party on board were well associated and agreeable—a good fortune: for all who have to pass days amid a chance society, thrown together on the wide ocean, full well know that one black sheep among the number is quite sufficient to destroy the comfort of the whole flock.

General Neil, the distinguished French officer of Engineers, who had commanded our allies at Bomarsund, and his aide-de-camp, Colonel Wauhert de Genlis, a colonel on the staff of General Canrobert, who, having proceeded to Paris with

despatches from the Crimea, was returning to the side of his gallant chief before Sebastopol; two young and well-bred captains of English artillery,* also proceeding on service to the seat of war; and four most agreeable English gentlemen, on their way to the East to visit the allied armies and the fleet; and, finally, two French Protestant clergymen—good men and Christians—proceeding on God's work to Scutari, formed a society which at once amalgamated agreeably, and caused a voyage, for the most part over rough seas, brief though it was, to pass away with interest and hilarity.

As we quitted the harbour, a glowing winter's sun sank behind the western hills of the bay, casting its parting rays on the wild rocks and towers of the Château d'If, familiar to all Europe —a great brown rock with fortifications on its summit, and walls and ramparts running round it. From the summit of this rock the redoubtable Count of Monte Cristo was flung into the

* One has since lost his right arm.

burial-place of the château, and to this Dumas' strange and imaginative story has given a peculiar charm, though it be an ugly and otherwise uninteresting rock. All the dungeons of the castle, even its summit, are now open to the inspection of the wanderer who may desire to explore them; and, strange to say, or at least report declares, that amid the thousands who have visited it, the name of Dumas does not appear, though frequently a visitor at Marseilles. We soon left the château in the far distance, the night closing in darkness ere we lost sight of the rugged outlines of the coast of France.

When morning broke, we were steaming rapidly, with a brisk wind and troubled sea, within sight of the wild shore and headlands of Corsica, the summit of the mountains, in many parts, being capped with snow. By nightfall we had passed the Straits of Bonafacio, which divide the interesting islands of Corsica and Sardinia; and ere day had once more closed into night, Stromboli was seen in the distance, and when sunrise

again hailed us, we had passed the troubled waters which wash the shores of Scylla and Charybdis, and were safe in the calm and beautiful harbour of Messina. There we remained but a few hours, of which we availed ourselves to run over the town, and visit the Cathedral, still of high interest, though most of its architectural beauties were destroyed by the earthquake of 1782. I would, however, suggest an immediate walk to the convent of St. Gregorio; the interior is worthy of a visit, and the esplanade, high on the summit of the tower on which it stands, commands a view of surpassing beauty.

The position of Messina, lovely as it is, as are many other scenes during this brief voyage to the East, touches the heart with the more regret that a people, to whom God has given a home amid a land of milk and honey, a climate of the finest, a position the most desirable, at a period when civilisation is making such rapid progress in the world at large, with constant and rapid communication with the whole of Europe, should yet be

so utterly indifferent, or prevented from taking advantage of all that would convert that which God has made so beautiful into an earthly Paradise, yet are content or compelled to exist in dirt, ignorance, bigotry, and immorality. Moreover, at the present moment, when a rapid communication from Marseilles to Constantinople and the seat of war is of the utmost importance, alike to the Governments of France and England, more particularly in reference to the rapid conveyance of the mails and despatches, it is inconceivable, the obstacles which are thrown in the way by the Neapolitan Government. Vessels from the East, as from France, are all put in quarantine under the slightest pretext, through cholera existing in Catania communication is allowed with Messina.

Should the weather be fair, the run, after passing Riggio, the most southern of Italian towns, and gliding along the Sole of the Italian foot, across to Cape Matapan, the first land generally sighted on the Morea, is an affair of about thirty-six hours. Should the weather be rough, as it

not seldom is, the swell, owing to the currents which flow from the Gulf of Venice, and meet the Mediterranean Sea, is a very heavy one, and a very disgusting one in every sense, even to those who do not suffer from the horrid effects of sea-sickness. Moreover, Cape Matapan is an ugly customer, apt to stare one in the face rather longer than is agreeable. The boat, however, behaved very well, and after a tolerable shaking and some discomfort we sighted the island of Cerigo, made great progress during the night, and when morning broke were gliding calmly amid the Ægean Isles towards the harbour of the Piræus.

Nothing could exceed the beauty of that morning, winter though it was, as in smooth water we steamed in and took up our berth close to the flag-ship of the French Admiral Barbier de Tinon, in command of the Grecian squadron. And I must admit, as the sun burst forth from a blue and almost cloudless sky, flashing on the mountain tops, with a temperature equal to that

of May; after the severe tossing we had experienced on the previous night, the effect was more like romance than reality, and greatly enhanced the beauty of all things around us.

I confess, however, unmindful of all others, that were it possible to divest one's imagination entirely of the past, and look only on the present, as regards the land of Greece, truth must admit that beautiful is it only from outline and the distant view, or beheld as adorned with the brightness and interest with which imagination and the memory of other days must ever invest it.

Landed on the Athenian shore, the picture which presents itself at the present moment is alike varied as strange to the eye. Soldiers of the French empire intermixed with the red jackets of Old England; here and there a sentry of France, with his wide red trowsers, or an English orderly, stiff, clean and pipe-clayed, not having yet been to the seat of war; altogether form a strange contrast amid capoted Greeks, brilliant Albanians, dirty bearded Turks, Armenians, and

sailors of various nations, forming a picture alike picturesque and touching.

The Messagerie steamers remain, generally speaking, only a few hours in the harbour of the Piræus; a time sufficient, however, for those who desire a hasty visit to modern Athens.

There are plenty of carriages, such as they are, ready for this service, drawn by two small and wretched-looking horses, who nevertheless get over the ground, about four miles, very rapidly.* The road is flat throughout, with a tolerably solid foundation; the surface being all white mud in winter, and all white dust in the summer—the mud, decidedly, for choice. A few ancient, stunted fig and olive trees, with here and there one recently planted, together forming an attempt at an avenue, describe the high road from the port to the capital of King Otho. The country throughout is flat and uninteresting, as all the

* It is said a railway has been planned, and could be carried out for a very moderate sum. If the fare be only threepence, I question if Greeks will not do as their forefathers —walk.

travelled world, if they speak truth, must admit; here and there a cultivated field, or an olive wood, the most ungraceful of all woods (sacred though the tree), is all that meets the eye. And were it not that Mount Hymettus towered on the right, and the Acropolis loomed forth in the distance from all points on that fairest of fair winter mornings, I should boldly declare my utter disappointment. In fact, those who expect to see in modern Athens aught but the remnants of its former splendour, will be wofully deceived. The Acropolis, at which I passed an hour on that splendid morning, and from which the whole city is distinctly seen, is the point for those whose time is brief at once to visit: it contains, for the most part, all that still claims interest as regards Athens; which reposes, as it were, beneath it. Under the protection of its ruined walls is the temple of Theseus. And from these splendid monuments of ages past, so often and so well described, I will turn to modern Athens.

The royal palace, built by Grecian hands, of

white marble,—it might have been of brick, if marble had not been cheaper and more readily obtained, as far as its architectural features are concerned—is inferior to many union-houses approved of by the Poor-law Board, and far inferior to very many country seats in Old England; and this with such specimens of art daily before them. The garden (the "Queen's Garden") adjacent to the palace, but apparently not attached thereto, is a wild and ill-arranged accumulation of evergreens and other trees, formal alleys, without turf or verdure to relieve their monotony, the whole surrounded by a barrier of the cactus or prickly pear. It is said her Majesty the Queen is an active-minded, energetic lady; physically active alike in her out-door pursuits as mentally in her in-door intrigues. Of the latter I know nothing; but it is a fact that she rides about the neighbourhood on horseback, is a good horsewoman, and, though not slight in person, is a good dancer. She also drives a pair of Arabs with much dexterity. I am told she

has also a small farm in the neighbourhood of Athens, and has much taste for agriculture: therefore, who knows but that a Grecian bullock may not, some of these days, gain the prize at an English agricultural show? His Majesty is also fond of, and believes himself a judge of horses, and, consequently, possesses a large stud, such as they are; by far the best of them, for his purpose, being the small and well-formed cross Arab breed of the country. Moreover, he has forty thousand a-year; of which report, not over correct, declares him to spend ten. The Grecian army, to judge of it by the specimens I beheld on duty in the capital, are a mere farce in European clothing, which greatly disfigures a race physically fine, however degenerated. Modern Athens, in fact, with the rare exception of diplomatic comfort, English and French, is a pigstye — a miserable spectacle — as the capital of a fallen nation and retrograding race in the midst of an era of civilisation and progress. The only manner one can reasonably account for the filth of

the streets is, that the land is too rich to require manuring; and the climate, which has alike a great influence on the nature of the buildings required for the comfort of man, as the men themselves, have the same effect on the horses. Something may also be said for the people themselves, who, from their very infancy being accustomed to the sea, look on the land only as a second home; and this feeling, in a degree, still operates through all classes.

Athens and its history of the past offers but painful truths to the memory, in comparison with the practical facts of the present; and even its inhabitants, as those of the whole of Greece, ever dwelling on what has been, appear to evade the offered advantages of what is, with little hope for the future. I may be judged harshly when I say that truth compels me to admit, that, however sensibly affected with its natural charms, I was deeply disappointed with the very little I saw of the place and the people, and my opinion in no manner altered by subsequent visits. The

view from the Acropolis, however, was brilliant, the sun colouring the Athenian atmosphere with a glow of warmth, with which the marble columns, the mountains and the sea, were all touched. A sunset must indeed be surpassingly fine, and I was told that the violet hue which Mount Hymettus assumes from a fine summer's evening sky, in contrast with the comparatively bare rock of Lycabellus, is lovely; but it was winter when I first beheld it, and the charms of nature were not then displayed. The character of the landscape around Athens is very peculiar, both in simplicity of outline and colouring, combined with its form and extent. It can by no means be termed a rich scene, as being utterly devoid of wood, save a few clustering olives and olive plantations. It has, however, an air of great repose; but its chief charm, to me at least, rests in the varied form of hills which surround its extensive plain, and the calm bay of Salamis in the distance.

CHAPTER III.

LEAVING the Piræus at two P.M. with a calm sea below and a bright sky above, we steamed through the narrow channels which divide the picturesque though wild and half-barren isles of the Ægean Sea, passing, ere the golden sun had set, Cape Colonna and its ruined temple of Minerva, so strangely removed from what had ever been the haunt of man: we could easily count the still standing columns, retained by the sea-air in spotless whiteness, having, till closely approached, the appearance of a structure from its freshness still in the sculptor's hands. A column, thus beautifully described in "Childe Harold:"—

"Save where some solitary column mourns
Above its prostrate brethren of the cave;

Save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns
Colonna's cliff, and gleams along the wave ;
Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten grave,
Where the grey stones and unmolested grass
Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave ;
While strangers only not regardless pass,
Lingering, like me perchance, to gaze and sigh, Alas!"

It stands deserted and alone on its rocky eminence, the base of which is lashed by the waves: thence the panorama rolls onward, displaying the plains of Marathon and the distant snow-clad heights of Mount Hymettus, causing one to recollect, and making it more difficult to reconcile the present with the past. Night soon hid from our view all of classic ground; and once more I must return to the realities of life on board a French mail-steamer. Notwithstanding the young moon which glittered on the sea and lightened our way, the all but summer's day changed into a night of intense cold, with threatening weather; happily, however, the rain kept off, which caused less regret at the sight of some hundreds of gallant soldiers, who, wrapt in their

grey blankets, and huddled together, slept apparently in comfort on every part of the deck, a slight portion of the poop only having been kept clear for passengers. The morning broke fair; still, however, becoming more cold and wintry as we approached the heretofore barred entrance of the Dardanelles.

The distant peaks of Mount Ida being entirely clad with snow, while the dark plains of Troy looked bleak and wintry, on the left, or European shore, Tenedos, almost within gun-shot, with its forts and rugged hills, and numerous windmills—objects ever seen near Eastern towns—was soon passed; and ere the hour of breakfast had elapsed, we were fairly running through those straits which Russian intolerance has unclosed to the entry of civilisation. Formidable barriers mark the entrance of those heretofore forbidden waters, though, I must confess, not so powerful as might be imagined, as a means of locking the great gate which leads to the City of the Sultan. The house of the British Consul appeared to me to be

the most striking object to mark the miserable town of the Dardanelles. It stands forth as if in proud command over the neighbouring forts, which are scattered in apparent profusion alike on the European as the Asiatic shores. Thence slipping between Sestos and Abydos, with a favourable though intensely cold wind, we anchored off the town of Gallipoli, at the entrance of the Sea of Marmora.

I may here remark, for the benefit of those whose imaginations are apt to run wild as regards Eastern climes and Eastern scenery, and who are unmindful as ignorant of the charms of their native land, that while the climate of South Devon, which I had left scarcely a fortnight ere I entered the Dardanelles, had been mild and dry throughout the winter, the nearer I approached the Eastern capital the colder it became. Patches of snow lay on the hill-sides, within two hundred yards of the sea-shore; a thing unknown, save during the most severe winters, on the southern coast of England: but that which is far

more to be dreaded than the cold of winter or the intense heat of summer, is the inconceivable and rapid changes of temperature. Pace the quarter-deck, during a voyage from Marseilles to Constantinople, for two hours, and then descend to your cabin for two more; winter is changed into spring, or spring to winter, or summer to autumn, or autumn to summer. It is the same at Constantinople, certainly not worse in the Crimea; and to a constitution unaccustomed to such sudden changes there is nothing more fatal. But we are now at Gallipoli. How shall I find words to describe it as it deserves? Certainly I have little to say in its favour as regards the place or its people,—less of admiration of its position or external sight. Nevertheless, it must be a town of deep interest to the people of England, inasmuch as it was the first where a portion of the British expeditionary army, in all the pride of health and vigour, landed in the East, as supporters of a just and noble cause, which has since

led them to a land where death in the battle-field, and death under all and every circumstance of pain and sorrow, has well-nigh caused their extermination. But it deserves a chapter to itself, if not of itself.

CHAPTER IV.

GALLIPOLI.

By way of introduction to those who may not be clear as to its position, I will, in a very few words, remark, that Gallipoli is situated at the mouth of the Propontis, in a strait above five miles in breadth, twenty-five miles from the Dardanelles, and forty from the Isle of Marmora, noted for its quarries of fine marble, eighty from Adrianople, and a hundred and eight miles south-west of the City of the Sultan. It is situated on a small peninsula, and has two small harbours, in which the Imperial fleet has not seldom found shelter. In fact, it is one of the chief rendezvous of the Capitan Pasha, or Admiral of the Turkish

fleet. Its population may be estimated at about ten thousand. Where they reside, it would be difficult to say by those who look on it from the sea, or, as I did, visit in person its every street, if such they can be called, save they are huddled together, as doubtless are they, in all the dirt, misery, and immorality which constitute every town in the dominions of him for whom the best blood of England is being spilled. The town was once fortified, as Turks do fortify their towns, towards the sea. At this hour there remains litle proof of its strength, if such ever existed, save it be the remains of a ruined Genoese castle, which commands the harbour, and is occupied at this moment by a guard of convalescent French soldiers and stragglers, who garrison the town. Towards the interior, in the far distance, it is protected by high and rugged hills.

It would be in vain—utterly in vain—were I to endeavour to describe, in any clear manner, this, the first place of reception for the noble expeditionary force on the Turkish territory, in words

sufficiently strong or explicit, if written in all truth, to convey to the minds of my readers who have never visited the East, far less to those who have never quitted the shores of Great Britain, even be his home the most humble or rural of English villages, any clear conception of the disgust Gallipoli conveys to an English heart. For my part, wishing in all respects to experience a sense of feeling that our gallant soldiers had enjoyed some comfort when there, I tried, and tried in vain, to convince myself of such fact, by personal observation and inquiry of those whom I deemed most worthy of credence, but to no purpose. The town is nothing more or less than a miserable chaos of wooden houses and narrow alleys, termed streets, abhorrent to the eye as the senses. True, it was during the winter—in fact, only a fortnight previous to my writing this—that I found myself wading through mud and mire, in the vain hope, by visiting the locality, to discover some portion of the town less dirty and disgusting than the other; but my

efforts were useless, and many times since I have been equally unsuccessful. The bazaars are certainly extensive as regards the size of the town; and in so far as the wants of life are confined to pipes and tobacco, slippers and otto of roses, and such-like trifles, there is enough, and more than than enough; but there all reality terminates. The only house in the whole place which appeared to me to be habitable for the residence of a civilised man was that of the French Consul, which looks on the blue waters of the Sea of Marmora, and is doubtless as clean and habitable within as it appears without. Nevertheless, in the history of the East, Gallipoli is a place of some importance, and years on years must pass away ere its name ceases to find an echo in an English heart.

Fragments of sculpture are here and there scattered about, as if in memory of the past; and Gallipoli is alike the see of a Greek bishop, as it is the first European town which fell into the hands of the Ottomans, nearly a century before

the fall of Constantinople: consequently, they have had sufficient time to make it what it really is, the dirtiest place in Europe, as the first of the Sultan's dominions where the British flag waved in the breeze in April 1854.

In conclusion I may remark, as regards Gallipoli, that my opinions, formed on my first visit, from the most superficial though personal and practical knowledge, are, by subsequent visits, fully sustained, by no less a personage than the Emperor Sahu Saldogus, who, to comfort himself for its loss, remarked, that he was only deprived by the fate of war of a jar of wine and a stye of hogs. With regard to the wine in the present day, I can say nothing. Enquiry led me to believe that at present, although in the neighbourhood soil was rich in the extreme, so rich as to require no manuring in order to produce the finest crops of wheat—a fact which has, in some measure, always, in my mind, accounted for the dirt in Eastern towns—there were now

few vineyards or figs. I saw enough, and more than enough, to convince me every house in the place was a stye.'

The country in the immediate vicinity, as far as time permitted me to discover, consists of undulating plains, rising in the distance till hills become tolerable-mountains. These plains are intersected by vales or ravines, running towards the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmora; the whole, within a mile of the shore, being covered by fresh, green grass, which, during the heat of summer, doubtless burns up and becomes brown and dark, here and there sprinkled with stunted olive-trees. Beyond, the soil is rich, and in due season the golden corn waves in abundance. On this plain, and amid this golden corn, the French and English forces were encamped during the spring of 1854. And henceforth it must have an interest—a deep interest—to every English heart which has chanced to beat for a husband, son, or brother there. The

troops which occupied Gallipoli, under the command of the gallant Sir George Brown, subsequently sailed to Varna, and afterwards took part in those blood-stained fields, the events of which are now known to all the world.

CHAPTER V.

The wind blew with some violence, and with intense cold, as we quitted Gallipoli; and large patches of snow lay almost to the water's edge, and the distant hills were entirely capped in white, as we steamed on towards the great Eastern capital. As we approached the north-east, the sufferings our gallant soldiers had endured, and were still enduring, became more and more practically evident to those who were now contending with the bitter blasts of an eastern winter. For my own part, as I shivered on the deck, wrapt in warm clothing, I felt my spirits sink in mere thought of their cruel position. On the early morning following we took up our position amid

the innumerable vessels of all nations and descriptions which thronged the entrance to the Golden Horn, and for the first time I beheld that picture in reality which has been detailed again and again, for the world's admiration, in every possible and impossible shade of artistical and creative interest. As, however, I am relating simple facts, and desire neither to exaggerate nor detract, I shall dwell no longer in description of the City of the Sultan than in so far as relates to my own feelings on my first visit to a capital teeming with interest.

To speak of the position of Constantinople would only be to speak of that which thousands have looked on with varied feelings of admiration, delight, or disappointment; and I must confess that I experienced a nervous desire to gaze, for the first time, on those numerous palaces, and domes, and seraglios, and dark cypress groves, of which I had so often read, as I have since so often seen them. And now the great city was before me in all the reality of life

— must I confess it? — I felt sad and subdued in spirit. My dream of excitement was passed, my imagination had run wild. I was dissatisfied and displeased, why, I scarcely knew, save that the Constantinople I beheld was not the Constantinople of my dreams. The mental picture I had formed was utterly dispersed; I had thought so much of its many beauties, and soared so high in creative fancy, that I was doomed to fall from the pinnacle of my ideas; but, after all, without much injury — for time did for me that which it has done for many others, greatly healed my wounds. The minarets and the palaces, the dark cypress-trees and the seraglios, were all there, not, perhaps, precisely as I had pictured them, yet teeming with interest and beauty—not quite so picturesque as imaginative fancy had induced me to believe, yet mosques and minarets they were. Moreover, I beheld them while wrapped in the thickest of clothing, yet shivering with cold, instead of blazing forth in all the beauty and brightness of sunshine. In fact, it was on one of

the dullest, coldest, and most miserable of winter's mornings, such as all foreigners declare, — and, for the most part, we simple Englishmen believe — are only to be experienced in our own unrivalled isle, that I beheld the city through the mist which rolled up the Bosphorus as we ran close under Seraglio Point, and terminated a somewhat rough, but not unpleasant, voyage from Marseilles. But, though dark the clouds and unpleasant the weather, no man can deny that the position of this great city is most magnificent, and a farther survey of the scattered minarets and mosques, palaces and villas, clustering on the slopes of the dark-blue Bosphorus, convinced me that the approach of spring, with its soft air and refreshing verdure, would convert it into a bright and beautiful picture, unrivalled in general outline, as I have since seen it.

Here, — where but yesterday the war-standards of foreign nations were rarely seen — the battle-flags of England and France now flutter in numbers to the breeze; and each day, nay, each hour,

vessels from the seat of war, as from the Western Powers, arrive and depart.

But place your foot on shore. That moment all ideas of the beautiful, all Eastern sentiment, all poetical fancies, as all European realities nurtured by contact with recent progress and civilisation, terminate. You have real animal life, in its worse sense, practically displayed all around and about you, in the filth and disgust of the steep, narrow, dirty streets, through which you walk, utterly precluding the possibility of looking around you (at least in the winter season), either at the picturesque houses, and still more picturesque people, in fear that you step, knee-deep, in loathsome filth, or roll in the mud.

Filthy and disgusting to the sight, and unpleasant to the senses, of a civilised European, as are the streets of the City of the Sultan — exaggerated as have been its internal beauties, as its palaces, in which the Sultan smokes and reposes through life — an inert and miserable example to his people,—there is, nevertheless, at the present

time, deep interest in a visit to Constantinople, where Turks, Greeks, Armenians, French, and English, appear to have gathered from all the world beyond, in one moving mass of stirring life.

Here come the Turk and turban, though turbans have well-nigh given place to the fez—the Zouave—the French and English soldier and sailor—the Greek—the Armenian—and the Jew—officers and men going to the seat of war, or coming thence—attired in varied costumes—speaking in varied tongues. In fact, the world's representatives seem to have gathered together, as by one common consent, in vast multitudes to the city. The embassy of the Russian Autocrat stands with closed doors, uninhabited, and, as it were, isolated, alone—without a friendly voice within to find a sympathising echo without.*

The hotels, full to-day, to-morrow are empty, to receive new-comers. Lodgings are sought for

* Since converted into a French hospital. Truly our Allies sleep with one eye open.

in private houses. Men-of-war and merchant-vessels, steamers and transports, arrive and depart daily to and from the seat of war, or to and from the different nations to which they severally belong. And while the Turk complains bitterly—and so far truthfully—that every article of existence is increased tenfold in price, and declares that hundreds of his fellow-men are starving, or living on unwholesome vegetable diet; he also, in his heart, curses alike his allies as his enemies, that he is no longer permitted to smoke away his existence in the undisturbed possession of his peculiar pleasures.

And the simple truth must be told. Merchant and shopkeeper, master and man, of all nations and all grades, commercially existing in Constantinople—from whom, I deplore to add, our countrymen cannot be excepted—have but one object in view: that of overreaching their neighbour. English gold and English bills—usually at a premium throughout the world—are now at a discount of sixpence in the pound, or two-and-a-

half per cent in the city ruled over by the Sultan by permission of the bayonets of the Western Powers.

The hotels, of which there are several, are extravagant in their prices. The Hôtel d'Angleterre, of which the hostess is an Englishwoman, worthy of all respect, is, perhaps, the best. Seventeen francs a-day (and I mention this fact merely for the benefit of those who may chance to visit the East) are charged for bed and board, which consists of a fair breakfast and a dinner, of which there are scarcely much grounds for complaint, and yet it might and ought to be far better for the money; a bed-room, generally selected in reference to the vacancies on your arrival — the first come being the best served; and the use of the public room for sitting or smoking in, which is commodious and comfortable. Breakfast is served from six in the morning till mid-day; and dinner, at the table-d'hôte, in the winter (later in summer), at six, for which, whether you eat it or not, you pay. Then come the "extras," which are

a formidable addition to the daily disbursement of fifteen francs. It imports but little whether your requirements be a cigar, or a bottle of soda-water, or a bottle of claret; a piece of charcoal to warm your bed-room, a sedan-chair, or a scidlitz—pay you must, and pay enormously. Still, you are not without luxuries, seldom cheap in the East, even in the piping times of peace. You have good open grates and blazing fires in the public rooms —a great and undeniable winter enjoyment, even in the City of the Sultan.

I will not here attempt to describe the bazaars or their owners, the material features of which have been so often depicted by writers of all classes. All I choose to observe on them is the fact, which I know from my own observation, that the "honesty" of which I have sometimes heard must have vanished, by some incantation, a little before my arrival—a more unconscionable set of cheats never existed than the majority of the present occupants. This is one of the reasons which make it necessary to have a guide of complete

experience in the ways and customs of the place, of fair powers as a linguist, and, moreover, of approved character. But even should you be so fortunate as to secure such an acquisition, truth compels me to disclose that it is well that his interest in your affairs should have a strong tendency to the advantage of his own, or you may still suffer severely; and that which you may consider to have been cheaply purchased will not the less be dearly bought; for those who dwell in Stamboul are rogues — undeniable, grasping rogues, from the muscular-armed and bare-legged Turk, who plies so well his graceful caïque on the dark-blue waters of the Bosphorus, to the merchant who smokes away his life cross-legged on the shelf of his bazaar.

On the first day of my arrival at Constantinople, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe did me the honour to request my company to dinner at the Embassy, which I had visited in the morning. It is, without, a well-proportioned building of granite, brought from quarries a few miles dis-

tant from Pera, and standing in the centre of that which will, with taste and time, become a pleasant garden of some size, surrounded by a wall, the whole padlocked, as it were, by a lodge: thus alone in its grandeur and comfort, if not in its architectural beauty, a strong and defined contrast to the quaint houses by which it is surrounded. Within, built in the Eastern style, an open square forms the basement, around which, as on the higher story, broad and airy corridors open to the apartments, approached by a handsome marble staircase, and fitted up with all the elegance and refinement appropriate to the position which the owner so justly fills. On the southern side the windows of the mansion overlook the Golden Horn, and a dark cypress-grove, which ever denotes a burial-place in the East, and which, save in the European gardens, are almost the only species of tree seen in or about the city.

Being naturally anxious to avail myself of the invitation of one of the most talented

diplomatists of this enlightened age, as also to enjoy the society of his accomplished wife, I inquired for the means of putting my wishes into practice at the hour named. It is true that I had walked there in the morning — a distance of scarcely half-a-mile from the hotel — up to my ankles in mud and mire; a walk I could scarcely undertake at night, without a single lamp to lighten my path, with any hope of presenting myself in decent attire at his Excellency's dinner-table. I had certainly seen some carriages in the streets during the day, but I had scarcely courage to enter one, from the positive sensation of absurdity with which they inspired me, inasmuch as they are precisely similar — horses and all — in miniature, to the gilded state-coaches of our ancestors in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; their only means of access and egress, moreover, being through the windows. In fact, it is almost impossible to conceive that a people surrounded by civilisation should remain so utterly, if not Eastern, — for that merit

they can scarcely claim—but seemingly incapable of all progress.

I applied to the obliging hostess, who at once relieved my anxiety as to muddy boots in circles diplomatic, by declaring that I need scarcely distress myself, inasmuch as there were scores of sedan-chairs at my service, and that one should be ready in due time to convey me to my destination.

At the appointed hour, accordingly, I found myself seated in a capacious and commodious sedan-chair, gilded without and satined within; and in less time than could be credited was whisked through the foul streets to the palace of my courteous and distinguished entertainer: where, be it said, the example of hospitality which I witnessed was such as alike to do honour to the taste and liberality of the noble dispensers, and to uphold the dignity of our beloved country. Each of my bearers carried on his little finger—the leader on his left hand, the wheeler on his right—a paper Turkish lantern, which so excited

my admiration that, for a very small outlay, I became on the following day the owner of some half dozen, which I purpose handing over to some little nieces to decorate a Christmas-tree. These bearers are fine athletic fellows, who evidently considered the light weight in a white neckcloth they bore to the Embassy a pasha of innumerable tails, as they thrust all whom they met most unceremoniously out of the way; and, moreover, charged me eight francs, — to say nothing of their impudence in demanding *bachshish*, which means, something to drink—for doing that which an English sedan-bearer would have done for a shilling. In truth, an importation of these athletic Turks would be of great service for the frequenters of tea-parties in our native inland towns, barring their charge.

It was my good fortune to be present at Constantinople at the termination of the feast of the Ramaan, so frequently and so graphically described by writers on the East. And thus I beheld the Sultan's visit to the mosque

of Tophana, followed by an illumination of the war-vessels on the Bosphorus, and a display of fireworks of the most brilliant and varied character,—so beautiful, indeed, and so varied, that Cremorne would have expired with jealousy at the first half-hour of their explosion; those recently exhibited at Versailles having no comparison.

This frivolous, if not painful, exhibition on the sabbath evening, in honour of a barbarous custom, must have cost a sum which would have been sufficient to have supported a Turkish battalion for a twelvemonth. Are they ever paid for?—Perhaps not, save by English capital.

CHAPTER VI.

Those who travel to the East, as to the seat of war, by the routes which I am briefly endeavouring to illustrate, will naturally meet on board with numerous persons of all nations, as of all characters. I must own it has been my good fortune, on almost every occasion that I have taken passage on board the boats of the Messagerie Impériale, to meet with several very agreeable companions; and in like manner have I come in close contact, for several days, with very strange ones. To speak of persons by name, either in courtesy or censure, save they are public characters, I have great objection; but, in so far as no wrong is intended or no evil can arise, the case is different.

The majority, certainly, of first-class passengers are unquestionably English; and should the war terminate favourably to the Allied arms, I imagine that the few who are now induced to travel, for what is termed a mere trip of pleasure, in search of pastime, will be converted into legion. English travelling gentlemen, and English officers proceeding to, or returning from, the seat of war—French officers, also, with an occasional sprinkling of Americans or Greeks, for the most part, however, now form the society who come on board at Marseilles. Cape Matapan, passed by the Messina line, or Malta reached on the other, the scene changes: Greeks, Turks, Armenians, and every species of traveller, high and low, rich and poor, throng the boats on their way to the City of the Sultan, — Smyrna, Syra, Mytelene, the Dardanelles, and Gallipoli. Among such an heterogeneous gathering of live-stock, it follows that a voyage can scarcely terminate without discovering some specimens, either greatly to amuse

or annoy. On one occasion I had the pleasure of meeting with two persons of the most adverse characters, who, in their different ways, amused and greatly interested me. The one was a young Captain of Zouaves;* the other, a robust and honest owner of an English transport. On a subsequent occasion I met with two objects, causing me alike pain and disgust. The one, the presence of sixty young female slaves, who were proceeding from Smyrna to Constantinople, in charge of two brutal-looking slave-masters. The other, a fat and sensual Turkish pasha, accompanied by his three wives, two sons, and many retainers.

The Captain of Zouaves could scarcely have exceeded five-and-twenty years of age. Handsome in person, manly, frank, and courteous in manners, he was by nature, as evidently by choice, a true soldier of the tented field. In fact, almost a child of the wild Arabs, from having served in Algiers since his beard had commenced its

* I greatly fear, since killed.

growth—his home the camp, his resting-place not seldom under the vault of heaven. In the course of conversation he informed me, without the slightest assumption of manner or bravado, that he had been five times wounded,—four times in Algeria, and again at Inkerman. On the last occasion General Canrobert had sent to him to say that his wound should be bandaged with the ribbon of the Legion of Honour. "I ask for nothing more," he replied. "This, however, is the third time it has been promised; but, as yet, I have never received it." "Be satisfied," said Canrobert; "the Emperor will never neglect a brave soldier." "I obtained the wished-for prize," he continued, "and now, though scarcely recovered from my wounds, I am again returning, after a brief visit to my home, to the side of my brave comrades." In truth, he gave sufficient evidence of not having recovered from his wound; nevertheless, he was all anxiety to be once more in the battle-field, and full of energy and manly spirit. In-

deed, the day subsequent to our arrival at Constantinople I met him in the bazaar. He appeared so cast down,—I really feared he had some great cause of sorrow; and so had he. His brave Zouaves, as he called them, had suffered severely in a recent sortie. Of this he had just been informed, and he took the fact of his not having been present to share their dangers as much to heart as if he individually had been the cause of those disasters. I asked him if he frequently visited his home. "Rarely," he replied, "save when I have been wounded, and then I seek rest." Nevertheless, his family were alike wealthy and of high birth. Surely so brave a heart must have had one to beat in unison with his own at home? Sweet home! But no! such could not be!—for war was his heart's choice—the tent his home—the earth his nightly resting-place—the battle-field his glory.

The frank, but somewhat rough captain of transports—who matutinally appeared on deck spick and span, well shaved, and well brushed,

with wide blue trousers, blue jacket, and ample watch-guard — was a totally different character; to him England was the one and only country worth naming, — an Englishman alone to be trusted or believed. Nevertheless, he had evidently a warm, honourable, and generous heart, though that heart was utterly devoid of one poetic feeling or impracticable imagination. Truth, the performance of duty, and courage, were the motives he most esteemed, and which formed his character, combined with an irresistible quaintness of manner and expression. He was proceeding to Balaklava, in order to take charge of a large transport, which he had hired to the Government, and which had, unfortunately, been dismasted and otherwise injured in the fearful gale of the 14th of October last. And the life on board a French steamer was not only obnoxious to him, but he utterly despised the whole crew, whom he declared with some truth were perfectly ignorant of their profession; as well they might be, considering they were of all

nations, and for the most part had, doubtless, been of all callings, till the fate of War, and the want of hands, placed them on board the Messagerie steamers, to risk people's lives until practice gave them some knowledge of their nautical duty. "I have crossed the Atlantic," said my robust acquaintance, "a hundred times, during all weathers, and in every sort of craft, but I never felt nervous till I found myself on board a French merchant steamer. The captain and his officers appear to know their duty, but not so the men. Starboard or port is all alike to them. I never sleep at night, as I am always expecting a crash in the centre of one of these rocky islands"—(we were then in the Archipelago, which he termed the "Hunches of Pelago");—"and as for the commissariat, I am starved, utterly starved: to live on oil, olives, and bonbons, is not my habit; and as for the vin ordinaire, it is the vilest vinegar. Oh for a slice of boiled beef and a bottle of porter!"—a wish in which I fully joined him. On our ar-

rival at the Piræus, and subsequently among the Grecian Isles, as along the coast, he afforded me no end of amusement; and to speak truthfully, his observations, quaint though they were, were, nevertheless, far more true than half the romances that are written in reference to Eastern scenery.

"That is Tenedos," I observed, as we steamed rapidly towards the entrance of the Dardanelles; "and on the right you see the Plain of Troy, with the tombs of Ajax and Achilles." "Tenedos, sir! is it?" he replied. "I am neither a poet nor a classic; but, being either, I could say nothing for Tenedos at home, save that it is a dirty little ruinous village, with various windmills around it, instead of trees; and as for the Plain of Troy, it looks a good place for a pitched battle. And those may or may not be the tombs of the military heroes you name; but, if so, I question if Sir De Lacy Evans, on the same ground, would not have given them all a thrashing and long odds of men.

The forts of the Dardanelles, with steam power, he defied, as worse than useless against the English navy. From Gallipoli, at which place he landed, he returned in a quarter of an hour, declaring it was the dirtiest place on earth; and as he had visited the first town in Turkey, if others were like it, he trusted it might be the last.

Arrived at Constantinople, he came out in great force. "So that is the Golden Horn! And why so called?" I stated the usual belief, that it was so named from the curved direction of its course, as it flowed towards the Valley of Sweet Waters, and the wealth in shipping it always contains. "By the blue eyes of my Mary," said he, "henceforward the Mersey shall be called the Golden Hoof, for we could kick them by thousands in number and wealth of shipping." Thence he burst forth in reference to Seraglio Point, which he termed "Seraggli Pint." "And that is Seraggli Pint! Well, it's a regular Rosherville Tea Garden, more pleasantly situated, but not so well wooded or so well

painted." Of Scutari and its hospitals, his remarks were quaint; but I had no time to linger on board after we had cast our anchor; yet, when I shook the hard, but honest, hand of my sailor acquaintance, and hoped that he would find the City of the Sultan more to his taste than he expected, he replied: "No, Sir, I do not fancy these parts, or the people; and one half of Old England, which no one goes near, is far more beautiful than aught we have seen since leaving Marseilles." And he spoke truth.

The Turkish Pasha, who subsequently accompanied me in the same steamer on my return, as far as Smyrna, on his way to Magnesia, was a corpulent and perfect specimen of his race. He came on board, not only with all the arrogance of Pashaship, but with three wives, two sons, six pipes, and a follower to each pipe; in addition to a disgusting black eunuch and his caravash, or guard. I never beheld so fat a Pasha; and I give his picture (unfortunately mislaid), taken from the life, though the heat of bringing it home

must have diminished the size of his shining cheeks, which were rotund and glowing like melons. Nevertheless, I must do him the justice to add, that it also beamed with apparent good humour. Having taken possession of his cabin, he thence established himself in a small alcove in the saloon, and commenced chibouque* No. 1; from which time he continued smoking, with few intermissions, till tired nature called for repose; his attendants continually bringing in fresh clean pipes, already ignited. Where he slept I know not, as no cabin, however capacious, in any vessel I have seen, would have contained him. Neither did he eat with the general company, but alone. From his alcove he surveyed the dinner-table, from which he selected various dishes; and what with the addition of oil, olives, and pickles, he managed to consume an inconceivable abundance, for the most part making use of a fork, though his fingers occasionally came into play. On the second evening of the passage, some young English officers, after ad-

* Turkish pipe.

miring the jewelled amber mouthpieces of his pipes, managed to make friends with him, with such success that he was, at length, induced to join them in a glass or two of not very weak brandy and water, which so overcame his Excellency, that he afforded us irresistible cause for laughter: the laughter was soon suppressed, however; for one of the English officers, having, either by accident or intention, peeped into the cabin which contained his wives, his eyes flashed fire, and his cheeks puffed out twice their usual size: indeed, it was with much trouble the captain of the vessel appeased his anger, by assuring him that he did not hesitate to look at the English women on board, and if he travelled on the high seas in European boats he must subject himself to the custom of the people he met with, who had an equal right on board. On our arrival at Smyrna, much, I fancy, to the satisfaction of all the passengers, the portly Turk bid us farewell, pipes and all. His departure was a source of some amusement; and the curiosity of the English on board, among

whom I numbered, led us in a slight degree to overstep the Eastern rules of courtesy, which possibly ought to have induced us to allow both the Pasha, his wives, and retinue to disembark in privacy. As it was, we leaned over the side of the vessel and fully scrutinised the party as they embarked in the shore-boat. First, the wives descended the ladder,—as usual, their faces being carefully hid from view by the muslin folds of their yasmatchs. Nevertheless, their dark eyes flashed and wandered, carefully scanning the whole of us. They may be easily described: fat, not fair, but forty; in fact, the usual bundle of clothes, terminated by yellow boots. Next followed their portly lord. Around his capacious waist he wore an embroidered belt, to which was attached a scimitar, with the handle of which he played, as if desirous to have a slash at the infidels who were so unceremoniously looking at the full-blown roses of his harem. He appeared somewhat bilious,—a bad head-ache, doubtless, from the effects of the punch he had imbibed

the previous day, and his seeming anger was not a little excited by the smiles which glowed on half-a-dozen English faces who watched his proceedings.

The Pasha was followed by his two sons; the elder, a handsome young man of five-and-twenty, who silently smoked throughout the passage on deck. I do not recollect his ever having entered the cabin, or spoken to his father. The younger was a pale and sickly-looking spoiled lad of ten; both of them were attired in military blue frock-coats, embroidered girdles, with handsome swords attached, and long brass spurs on their heels.

Then followed the black eunuch, his pipe-bearers, the household being terminated by the guard, or caravash—a cut-throat looking brigand, with a belt full of pistols and daggers, as also a huge sword by his side: which implements of war I very much question his having the courage to make use of, save to possess himself of an unarmed traveller's purse. As the illustrious Pasha was proceeding to Magnesia—his native place—

I strongly recommended him to supply himself with some rhubarb on landing at Smyrna; which ingredient, mixed with a little of the former-named, I suggested, might improve his digestion, as well as his temper.

Another scene, of a totally different nature, presented itself on board one of the boats by which I chanced to be a passenger, which touched alike my heart as my indignation, as did it indeed surprise me. I cannot pass it lightly over. It was simply the arrival from Smyrna of a living cargo of no less than sixty female slaves, attended by two of the most revolting-looking fellows I ever beheld. The whole of them were girls, whose ages averaged from twelve to fifteen. A portion of the fore-part of the vessel was allotted to them, their sole attire being coarse loose trowsers, with a coarser blanket thrown over their shoulders — they lay literally huddled together, like a flock of sheep. I visited them on several occasions, and found them at times sleeping—the head of one on the back of another, and so on, precisely as

a litter of young pigs. Others were laughing and chattering, or munching a coarse ration of bread, with which they were supplied. To speak truly, they by no means appeared cast down or sorrowful, but rather rejoicing at the novelty of the scene. This did not remove the disgust from my mind, or allay my anger. A traffic in human flesh it was, and nothing less, and I felt an ardent longing to throw their two cut-throat keepers overboard. These unfortunate human beings, with souls in utter darkness of the Lord's blessings, apparently thus sent forth from home and country to do the will of those whose slaves they become, I was assured, were proceeding to Constantinople, as gifts to various Turkish families, to the female portion of which they are attached, and by whom they are not seldom treated with much kindness. Of the latter I scarcely doubt the truth, but that they are not sold is a statement far too absurd to admit of a moment's notice. And yet though England, France, and Austria, are diplomatically represented, or at least have consulates at Smyrna,

unknown to the authorities at home such atrocities are constantly allowed in this, the nineteenth century. Though slavery is pronounced to be no longer legal, even in the East — as, however, the owners of these unfortunate beings are permitted by the authorities to leave the shores of Smyrna with their living cargo unmolested, and as they naturally represent and pay for them as deck passengers, the captain of the French merchant-steamers have no authority to refuse them on board; and thus, at the very moment when the allied armies are spilling their best blood under the banners of freedom and civilisation, this atrocious merchandise of human beings is suffered, contrary as it is to the laws of God and nature, revolting to the feelings of humanity and nations. Happily, I was enabled to place these facts before one who has the power, and, I trust, the will, to ascertain their truth, and bring down punishment on the wretches, who evade as they may the laws of man, cannot evade the all-searching eye of God.

On our arrival at Constantinople I observed a poor crippled boy, whom I had not previously beheld, in addition to the female slaves, and on their disembarkation a scene took place which has ever since been engraven on my heart with absolute feelings of pain. It thus occurred. The girls being seated in rows in the boat prepared to convey them on shore, the boy, who used crutches, was carried down the companion ladder in the arms of one of the owners, in a rough manner, and evidently suffering. During the descent he dropped one of his crutches, and subsequently was all but thrown into the boat: so great was the agony of that young face, I shall never forget it. This act being witnessed by an English officer in a boat alongside, with a thick stick he struck the brutal slave-owner across the shoulders, who shook in silent anger, but the boy's agonised look of horror, mixed with gratitude, convinced me, on this poor little cripple's back would fall tenfold stripes for the action of his kind defender.

CHAPTER VII.

And now I would strongly urge on the notice of those who may be desirous to visit the Eastern capital, or the seat of war at this present time, by the Mediterranean route, to proceed there unhesitatingly by the direct line of Messina and the Piræus, returning by that of Smyrna and Malta; without they select, in preference to either (time and money being no object), that of Vienna and Trieste, and thence by the Adriatic, joining the Mediterranean line at Cape Matapan.

I offer these suggestions solely as a means of enabling them to escape, without they be callous to human suffering, much and constant pain of heart, intolerable discomfort, and hourly sights, miserable to behold, and, without God so will

it otherwise, possible, indeed, probable infection. It is a painful picture I am about to sketch, nevertheless it is true to the very letter, and so will it continue to be as long as the horrors of war spread their terrible influences over the fate of nations. The direct mail-boats of the Messageric Impériale, I must observe, are compelled, by their contract with Government, in addition to private passengers, to take on board any number of sick and wounded officers and soldiers the French military authorities may judge fit to send by them. Thus have they literally become, on their return from the East, floating hospitals. On several occasions it has been my duty, certainly not my pleasure, to return to Marseilles therein; and the dismay of several passengers, who have unknowingly found themselves so placed, has called forth alike just commiseration and censure; for truly a passenger has some right to be apprised of the fact, however he may deplore it, that the poor sick officer, whose cabin he shares, is still suffering

from the Crimean fever, or has an undiscovered bullet in his body: either the one or the other, without the merciful will of God direct otherwise, may be the means, and is not seldom the means, of consigning his body to the deep long ere half the voyage is completed. And what a sight daily meets the eye on deck, causing the heart to ache, as the mind exceedingly to deplore the miseries of war! Men without legs, without arms, shattered bodies and heads, pale and care-worn faces, half the long day, half the long night, crawl about the decks, sick, sad, and sorrowful, to breathe the fresh sea air, hoping, not seldom against all hope, they may once more reach their native land — their home — either to gain fresh health and vigour, maimed though they are for life, or die on the soil of their heart's home.

Two hundred sick and wounded from the East is about the number who are generally placed on board these floating hospitals; and when I speak of those who are enabled, thus maimed and

shattered, to creep about the deck, let me not lose sight of the horrors endured by those who are confined in the lower cabins and holds. What these poor wounded and suffering men have to undergo during a passage of even six days at least, during the finest weather, with the thermometer generally at 90°, not seldom exceeding 100°, it is impossible to describe. In addition to the wounded men, sick officers repose upon the deck, and share the cabins of the healthy. Many, both officers and men, being sent on board in the very last stage of human suffering, on the principle that, should they be enabled to endure the miseries of the voyage, the air of France may possibly ignite again the last spark of life. If the weather is stormy, the scene I have thus feebly described is doubly revolting to the feelings of those who enjoy the blessings of health; sea-sickness, in many cases, is added to their other sufferings, and the rolling of the vessel not seldom opens wounds already partially closed — fever increases with human

agony, and the watch nightly consigns to the deep the remains of many a soldier whose heart has beaten bravely in the battle-field, and fought nobly for his country. How often has my own ached at such sights as these! as have, I would hope, my earnest prayers been heard, that the love of God may have dwelt strongly in the hearts of these poor soldiers. I cannot close this brief chapter without expressing my strong sense of the admirable conduct of the medical and other officers of these vessels, on board of which I practically witnessed the facts I know I have so scantily detailed, as my regret that no religious teachers should be at hand who might strengthen the faith of the weak, and add strength to that of the strong.

During a recent voyage that I made from Constantinople we had the misfortune to lose several men, and one superior officer. I was informed of the latter case early one morning, and the scene which followed was not only most touching, but redounded to the credit of the

captain as of the officers of the ship,* who, having caused a sort of screen to be erected on the deck, first took an inventory of the brave man's effects, and then, having most carefully replaced each article, closed and sealed up the few comforts that had followed him to the battle-field. I was permitted to look on whilst this last act of duty and kindness was performed for him, whose arm was now powerless, and whose heart had ceased to beat; and I am free to confess that a tear moistened my eye as now his sword and full-dress coat, now some decoration carefully packed away amid letters from the loved ones at home, now some little present, doubtless for absent friends, one after another, were carefully examined, and placed in safety, to be sent or given with his own brave hand to those whose bursting hearts would only receive fresh agony on beholding them. But I must close this chapter, for my pen refuses to write half which my heart feels on so painful a subject.

* The Ganges.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE day subsequent to my first arrival at Constantinople I crossed the Bosphorus for Scutari. With a blue sky above and a calm sea below, it is a matter of twenty minutes, and there are far more agreeable modes of passing the placid waters than in a commodious caïque. Stretched on soft cushions, with a chibouque in your mouth,

you look at the azure heavens and dream away an hour in thought of the past as the present. The light curling smoke rises in circles through the pure air, carrying with it many a recollection far distant from the land by which you so calmly glide; and as you approach the Asiatic shore, the numberless painted wooden villas of the Pashas, which, intermixed with trees and shrubs in the fresh, green garments of early summer, form a picture which, for once, can scarcely be exaggerated in description of its peculiar beauties. But this enjoyment is only in due season. Midsummer passed, even under an awning, the heat is not seldom too intense for enjoyment; add to which, the verdure, which is the principal charm, indeed the only charm which perfects an eastern landscape, is converted into a by no means rich brown. All is dark and dried up; while autumn, replaced by winter, sends down the Bosphorus from the Black Sea a north-easter, which goes in below the second rib, pierces the heart, and comes out at the back. Moreover,

those who are given to the luxuries of a caïque are by no means always to be gratified during the longest day of the summer; for even in June and July the north and north-east winds occasionally take it into their heads to blow with such fury, that the Bosphorus is not seldom an almost impassable and unsafe passage. And so it chanced to be with me on the first occasion that I crossed its then troubled waters; for the spray dashed over the sides of the caïque, even to a drenching, though my person was covered with a thick great coat. Moreover, the wind blew so keenly as to pierce the thickest of clothing; and altogether this passage across the Bosphorus was precisely the reverse of that which it is generally pictured in the imaginations of those who live at home at ease.

Nevertheless, I have subsequently traversed its blue and, at that period, placid waters, from the point where they flow into the Sea of Marmora to their influx from those of the Black Sea; and although I could not discover those

sublime and extraordinary charms, so greatly exaggerated and vaunted, as have the shores of the Bosphorus been by legions who have scarce one word of praise to bestow on the rich and lovely scenery of our native land; still, the moving panorama which presents itself as, reposing on soft cushions in your caïque, you are forced rapidly onwards by two Herculean Turks, is very lovely, as is the sensation very agreeable; and I must add that Turks, notwithstanding their natural repugnance to the slightest exertion in life, are nevertheless the most skilful of watermen, as are they equally so in their extortion of piastres from those for whom they work,—notwithstanding their usual indolence and indifference to all things but sleeping, smoking, and eating. I know not if their own countrymen are compelled to let loose their purse-strings as are those to whom they owe, but by no means appear inclined to pay, a heavy debt of gratitude, save it be by robbing them. But if so, their coffers must be tolerably well

supplied, or the means of locomotion in caïques, which is so generally, in fact, absolutely necessary to reach many of the villages and villas which line the banks of the Bosphorus, must be a comfort lost to them.

On the whole, the shores of the Bosphorus, whether those of Europe or Asia, are certainly very charming; creating, however, as here a sultan's palace is passed — here the residence of a Pasha, with its charming but ill-kept gardens down to the water's edge, a deep and ever-recurring regret that Civilisation and Art could not there walk hand-in-hand with glorious Nature! But I am now landing on the shores of Scutari, which requires a separate chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

I AM desirous to speak of Scutari and its hospitals, as in regard to other hospitals established in the East since the commencement of hostilities, with all truth as I found them when I first visited their corridors in January last, and as I again saw them in the months of February, March, May, and June; with the object, not of finding fault in matters which, professionally, I should be incapable of giving a just judgment; but with the hope, and a heartfelt one, of benefiting the sick and wounded who then thronged them, and whom the dire necessity of war may still cause to throng their corridors. It is only within the last few days,—indeed subsequent to these pages having been written,—that I have been gratified

by the perusal of a most truthful and touching work written by the Rev. Sydney Osborne, and it would be far from my desire to recapitulate one word which he has so usefully written. I may state, however, my belief that Mr. Osborne had left Constantinople previous to my having first visited that city. And while few of us judge things under the same auspices and the same feelings, he was there alike to see and to act, which he did with the most praiseworthy and Christian zeal, under the sanction and approval of the Government: while inclination, as the desire to observe things in their practical reality, was the sole cause which induced me to undergo a painful, and at times heart-rending ordeal.

In England, for a time at least, it was, I believe, for the most part imagined that the hospital at Scutari was the one and only hospital set apart for the reception of our troops,—an hospital at which Miss Nightingale so nobly presides over her little army of nurses, and with such Christian charity and patience attends to

the sufferings of our fellow-countrymen. This, however, was a great error, and it will therefore be my endeavour to explain these matters as they really are; though with pleasure I state that most material changes for the better have taken place since the early part of these lines was written. And I pray God they will tend, as they have tended, greatly to ameliorate the sufferings of those who have been cast down by disease or the fate of war. And it is well that the public hitherto, as ever in the time of need, so nobly generous to relieve the pangs of those who take up arms for Queen and country, as in any righteous cause, should know, and truthfully know, what is passing in the East, having reference to their army, irrespective of its active services in the field. Moreover, that the public mind, as far as can be, should be prevented from catching at every stray, incorrect, and wild report which floats down the stream of novelty or excitement, picking up by the wayside every possible and impossible tale that imagination can

invent; not seldom utterly unworthy of the slightest credence, frequently placing facts in a totally adverse position from what they really are, alike unjust to those who are so unselfishly slaving for the benefit of their country in their several callings, as for those who are spilling their blood, and exerting all their physical as well as mental energies at the call to arms, by the universal voice of England.

But, far more than all that, the benevolent may truly know where best their unexampled philanthropy may be made practically available. And that kindness of heart, noble feeling, and charity the most abundant, may not be ill dispensed and ineffective; or wrapped up to rot, as it has hitherto not seldom done, in stores or shipholds, like the rags and fine linen, which with such generous, but unadvisable abundance, were sent to the East, to harbour vermin or be converted into tinder, because some unwise, though doubtless well-meaning, philanthropists, believing it to be fact, wrote a letter in the "Times," setting

forth that no lint was to be had, and old rags were priceless—that Miss Nightingale had said so, and consequently no doubt existed on the question; although the authorities again and again had declared that which was fact, however difficult to get at, that there had been sufficient lint sent to the East to cover some acres. All the ill-advised, but nevertheless kind old ladies, in many instances aided by equally kind old gentlemen, as well as by innumerable energetic young ones, having read the letter to which I have alluded, declared that it came from Miss Nightingale herself. And forthwith they set to work with a benevolence highly praiseworthy, and which, directed in another channel, would have been most desirable, and collected tons of old rags, ay, and of new linen too. The greater portion of which lays in abundance, as useless lumber, at Scutari; the remainder never having found its way further than London, without, as it is to be hoped, it may have been dispersed among the paper-mills.

With my own eyes I beheld a vast quantity; indeed so vast, that a whole regiment would have been required to have converted it into bandages.

I name this simple fact solely as being one of the most trifling, though by no means the least convincing proof, of how generosity and noble feelings have been unadvisedly displayed and neutralised from the want of proper grounds on which to act. For, inasmuch as the rags which were not wanted went astray, that which was most unquestionably required went astray also; how it would be difficult to assert, save it was from the inefficiency or indolence of those whose duty it was to prevent it.

On my first landing on the shore of Asia Minor, I proceeded forthwith to the barrack hospital at Scutari; of which I would gladly have been permitted to insert a slight sketch, taken from the spot on which a portion of the British troops were bivouacked, and which in a measure is now rendered familiar to the whole of Europe.

Alas! how difficult would it be to analyse the feelings of him who stands on that historical ground!

A year has scarcely elapsed since, on that green sward between the ridges of Scutari and the meadows of Hadikeuoi, an English army was reviewed by a Sultan and a people whose wonder and astonishment surpassed belief when gazing on the vigour of their forms, and the splendour of their accoutrements. The great cypress-grove, unmentioned by no traveller to the Eastern city, thick with its undergrowth of neglected tombs, loomed behind them as a foil to set off so gallant a sight. It encircled them with ominous arms, and fills now a far different office. Relieved against its unchanging foliage, stands out in its massive size and harshness of outline the formal, vast, and not altogether unhandsome building, once a barrack, now an hospital, where the military commandant of a division of disabled men keeps his head-quarters, and where one fearless Christian woman holds, without arro-

gance, a firm yet gentle sway. Armed with a letter of introduction to her, and having also despatches for Lord William Paulet, with whom in former years I had had the pleasure of serving in the 7th Royal Fusiliers, and who now so efficiently commands the forces,* both sick and convalescent, at Constantinople, I presented myself for the first time at the barrack hospital, determined to see all that was to be seen with my own eyes; and to endeavour to judge of things, fairly and practically, as they actually were before me. I had neither the right nor desire to find fault, where faults there were, either in system or effect. Still less had I the right, or is it my desire, to allude personally to any one officially belonging to the establishment disparagingly, public servants though they be. God knows, their task has been trying and bitter enough; and wherein they have failed, their censure will come from those who have the right to censure, not me.

* Since the above was written, Lord William has resigned the above command to Brigadier-general Storkes.

This, however, I know, and well know, that Lady Stratford de Redcliffe has nobly and generously, and most effectively, exerted herself, both as regards time, money, and personal assistance, in reference to the well-being of the hospital at Kulalee; and if not rewarded by a just acknowledgment of the public for such praiseworthy conduct, given cheerfully, yet gratuitously, and at considerable expense, both of time and money, she will receive it in the heartfelt gratitude of many a gallant soldier, whose pillow she has smoothed, and whose sufferings she has ameliorated. Much has been said in reference to the neglect of our Ambassador, her noble lord. I have, I confess, as yet to learn that it is the duty of a diplomatist so efficiently directing our relations with the East, whose valuable time, day and night, is more than occupied by the duties of his high station, should be censured that he has not neglected those important duties to become an inspector of hospitals.

Those who are thus clamorous to condemn,

should understand that a whole day is required to proceed from Pera to inspect one hospital on the Asiatic shore. In the meantime important despatches are constantly arriving from the seat of war, as from England and elsewhere, entailing duties scarcely to be set aside. Nevertheless, Lord Redcliffe has visited the hospitals on several occasions in person, and is ever visiting them in heart, and thought, and act. He can do no more.

Of Miss Nightingale I shall speak hereafter. She ought to have endeared herself by her conduct, not only to the people of England, but throughout Europe; and in such character I shall allude to her. She will pardon me—she requires no printed praise—her acts speak loudly for themselves. Her God knows and watches over them—may He also watch over her!

My object in visiting, as I have done on each occasion of my being at Constantinople, the hospitals of Kulalee, Scutari, and elsewhere, must explain itself. I was not sent there on

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duty. I did not go there from mere curiosity. It was not for pleasure that I subjected my person to infection, my heart to bitter pangs, my eyes to overflowing; but I preferred employing the leisure time which I had at my disposal in such manner, rather than in visiting mosques and bazaars, seraglios and palaces, solely that I might look and learn, and thereby gain practical knowledge, which at a fitting time I judged might tend to enable those who had the power to mitigate the sufferings of our brave and enduring army.

In fact, I was anxious that the generous hearts of Old England should know the truth, and knowing it, use their sympathies aright, giving lavishly where abundance was required, but withholding that abundance rather than subjecting it to waste, and loss, and inutility entailed, (I must speak as it has been,) by the inefficiency and want of system, of whom I am not prepared to assert.

I found Lord William Paulet, who has served with much honour to himself throughout the

war, first on the personal staff of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, whose equerry I believe him still to be, and subsequently as Assistant Adjutant-general to the Cavalry Division, both at Alma, Inkerman, and Balaklava, as I have already stated, in the position of Commandant at Scutari.* There, in the barrack hospital, he occupied the Sultan's quarters, which, as he jocosely hinted, would require razing to the ground ere "the Light of the World" again smoked his jewelled chibouque therein, having been desecrated by a heathen.

He received me with the courtesy and kindness habitual to his race, and without loss of time introduced me to Miss Nightingale.

The previous evening I had had the pleasure of some conversation with Lady de Redcliffe at the Embassy, as also with Miss Stanley, a daughter of the late Bishop of Norwich, who, with the same philanthropy, and with a similar noble object to that of Miss Nightingale, had

* Now commanding a Brigade in the Crimea.

left a home of comfort and ease in England to superintend a corps of nurses at the hospital of Kulalee, on the Bosphorus, which I visited at a later period; and although there, as elsewhere, much had been wanting, I must in all truth declare, that even in the early part of March the medical officers, energetically aided by those ladies, had left little to be desired, as far as all that was reasonably necessary, and could be obtained for the comfort of the sick and wounded it contained. Now as regards the barrack hospital of Scutari, I was determined, as far as courtesy would permit, to leave nothing unseen and unknown which would enable me, on my return to England, to aid those there working under such painful circumstances, with such praiseworthy efforts for the benefit of their suffering fellow-creatures, by speaking boldly, and writing fully and fearlessly, of things as they were, with none other intent than that they might become, as I verily believe they now are, in this the month of September, in a most admirable and efficient state; and assured am I that

Miss Nightingale will do me the justice to believe that mere curiosity was the least portion of the object ever before me.

To speak of her personally requires alike delicacy and courtesy. But in so far as she holds a position which all the world allows her as a public benefactress, I may before the public be permitted so to place her name as best may do her justice; sanctified by a firm belief, grounded on her acts solely, without entering into mere passing remarks in reference to her peculiar position, or her mode and manner of its administration, save those her conduct has called forth. Moreover, I am far from being anxious to discuss the question as to whether the presence and assistance of a lady in her position have or have not been of great advantage as regards the working and efficiency of a military hospital, in peace or war, at home or abroad,—suffice that, in reference to our army in the East, it is as peculiar as it is interesting.

Neither would I assert, as many possibly with-

out consideration have done, that while on the one hand ambition, eccentricity of character, or public applause, have directed her course; on the other, that she has overstepped the line that some without any knowledge of facts would constitute the barrier laid down, over which female delicacy has no right to step. All I would venture to declare, and fearlessly to declare, is, that while in no single instance I believe Miss Nightingale has offended in act the most fastidious, I am equally prepared to assert that her efforts and assistance have been as meritorious as effective. And I fancy none who have entered that palace of suffering and sorrow, which for months has been her home, will fail to bless her, as those who have worked with her. Moreover, I have yet to meet the man, who, when cast down by pain and sickness, would not prefer the gentle tendency of woman in preference to the rougher, yet equally kind, aid of his fellow-man.

Be it as it may, I must own I was little pre-

pared to witness the self-denial, the noble devotion — as the utter absence, apparently, of all egotism — in one so young, so gifted, and so delicate, in her mode and manner of devoting herself to the sick and wounded, in the very centre of whom, regardless of pestilence and disease, she passes her valuable life; and this, having left a home surrounded by all that fortune could command, and the human heart desire. It is, indeed, an example worthy of all praise; an example which her gracious Majesty commends and upholds; "for who feels more sympathy than she does for her suffering soldiers?"—a fact proved beyond question in the following touching letter:—

"Would you tell Mrs. Herbert that I begged she would let me see frequently the accounts she receives from Miss Nightingale, or Mrs. Bracebridge, as I hear no details of the wounded, though I see so many from officers, &c., about the battle-field; and, naturally, the former must interest me more than any one.

"Let Mrs. Herbert also know that I wish Miss Nightingale and the ladies would tell those poor, noble, wounded, and sick men, that no one takes a warmer interest, or feels more

for their sufferings, or admires their courage and heroism, more than their Queen. Day and night she thinks of her beloved troops: so does the Prince.

"Beg Mrs. Herbert to communicate these my words to those ladies, as I know that our sympathy is much valued by those noble fellows.

(Signed) "VICTORIA."

Be assured the people of England will appreciate it, slight though be the recompense in comparison with the knowledge that God will reward her.

Mr. and Mr. Bracebridge,* her fellow-labourers, who also resided within the walls of the hospital, taking the same chances, sharing the same trials, are equally worthy of that consideration and kindness which they so generously mete to others.

On leaving Lord W. Paulet's quarters, we passed directly through the corridors or wards occupied by the sick and wounded — a most striking and most painful ordeal, enough, and more than enough, to raise up all the heart's

* Since returned to England.

feelings in bitter detestation of war and its cruel effects, just though it may be, righteous though its present cause. But my object was a personal knowledge, in the first instance, of those benevolent minds who were sharing the duties and responsibilities of the hospital. At the termination of a long corridor, in which more than a hundred men lay sick, wounded, and suffering, we entered a small apartment in one of the angular towers of the building, half-kitchen, half-parlour, where several nurses were actively employed in preparing arrowroot, soup, tea, rice-puddings, and similar comforts for the sick. Among them I observed several Sisters of Charity, in the costume of their order, bearing on their countenances, I must admit, a genuine and unaffected stamp of piety and kindness of disposition. Passing through this small room, we entered another of similar dimensions, furnished with the mere conveniences, or, I may say, absolute necessaries of existence. Amid a variety of articles requisite for the sick, before a table ap-

parently covered with letters, papers, and accounts just received from England, sat a youthful lady, whose features conveyed an appearance of mental repose and determination I have rarely witnessed. She rose to receive me, and extended her hand with kindness and good breeding—this was Miss Nightingale, simply attired, a small lace cap half covering her dark hair. Fit by education, grace of person, and refinement of intellect, having all the attributes most favourable to woman, to add happiness, by her merits, to the most favoured of English homes, in the very centre of pestilence, disease, agony of body, and subjugation of bodily mind from suffering.

Amid scenes of death and misery, but not despair—for the eye of God is there also—she passes a life devoted to the amelioration of our suffering soldiers, utterly regardless of self. Mrs. Bracebridge was also there, not less kind, considerate, and benevolent in mind and manners; and her thoughtful and energetic husband, with whom subsequently I visited every ward, almost

every sick bed, dispensing here and there, as we passed along the corridors, a quantity of newspapers which had been sent from England, and which were received with delight, as containing news from home, by such of the gallant and suffering soldiers who were sufficiently well to read, which in many instances they did aloud to their more suffering comrades.

I was then introduced alike to kitchens and stores. In the former of which, on the last occasion, I met the illustrious Monsieur Soyer, giving practical proof of his art. The good he has effected, as far as I could learn, has been of so much benefit, and productive of such advantageous results, that now and for ever I forgive him for the tasteless and ill-cooked dinner of which, in company with others, I partook at his "Emporium," in the Exhibition year.

The stores, even in March, were full to repletion. To the orderlies' rooms I was also introduced. In fact, I was kindly permitted a careful inspection of that charnel-house, the sight of

which will never be forgotten; and the result of these personal and minute inquiries enables me, without fear of contradiction, to declare that, notwithstanding all that has passed and been deplored, the state of the barrack hospital at Scutari, in the month of May, as in this the month of September, was all that can be desired, though we have still, in some degree, a slight lesson in system and organisation to learn, which, if not too proud to profit by, our gallant Allies are fully enabled to teach us.

In the meantime, the public mind may justly feel perfectly easy as regards the care and comfort bestowed, and to be obtained for our patiently enduring and most devoted army.

The stores are well and amply supplied with all necessary comforts, even luxuries. And so great has been the private contributions of every possible nature from generous England, that, for the present at least, I fancy Miss Nightingale has been compelled to put a stop to such benevolence in any shape. And although our Am-

bassador has, from the very first, had both the means and the will to aid in every possible manner; the noble subscription forwarded by the "Times," and renewed to the extent of five thousand pounds, has added in every possible manner to the comfort and well-being of the English army.

Again and again, in the various visits that I have made to Miss Nightingale, up to the present time, as also to Mrs. Bracebridge, I have invariably requested information as to their wants, that on my return I might make them known to the proper quarters. Even in March, little was required, save flannel; and since that period, the reply has ever been — Nothing!

In fact, I believe it may be fairly asserted, that at least one-half of the miseries which from time to time we have read of—at least those miseries which humanity could lighten—have been caused by the inefficiency of those selected to perform duties which they were utterly incompetent to perform, or indolently neglected.

Add to this, an over-worked army consequent on the weakness of its numbers, called on to undertake unheard-of duties in the trenches, during an unparalleled inclemency of season, beneath the canopy of heaven, in a climate to which they were totally unaccustomed and unacclimated. Add to this, a medical chief of the army at home, who, doubtless, to say the least of it, must have been cruelly misinformed, or in gross error, as to the requirements of the army; and little blame to him, when practical evidence was all but refused.

All things now are, happily under God, most materially altered for the better, whatever they may have been in the early part of the year. The medical department was then for the most part weak and inefficient—jealousies apparently unhappily existed—if they do not still exist among those who ought to be examples of energy, determination, and unselfishness.

Medical inspectors, past the period of life's best energies—unequal to contend either with

the horrors of war, and an unheard-of amount of disease—climate and want of those effective means at hand, or there and unattainable, so necessary for the due performance of their duties, fell sick themselves. Thus becoming useless and expensive encumbrances, instead of zealous, active, and practical administrators. Hospital-dressers, mere boys from school; equally useless, half educated as regards their profession—many not having passed the usual examination which the law demands and reason expects for home service. Suffering from climate and overwork, and the miseries of an hospital life like that at Scutari when first opened, and to which they were utterly unaccustomed, and, as was natural where youth is concerned, and novelty presents itself, rather seeking diversion in a new country, and that country the East, with Constantinople, the most odious of immoral capitals, at hand, instead of devoting themselves to a noble profession, as to a noble cause.

I make these remarks without intended offence

to a body of men, for whose profession, as in the most part for themselves, I have the truest goodwill and the highest respect. Moreover, I am well aware there are, and have been throughout this painful war, noble exceptions among the class to which I have alluded.

Orderlies also to attend on the sick, doubtless, in many cases unavoidably, were selected to perform duties at the hospitals, from among the convalescents, utterly unaccustomed to, and unequal to the very responsible and peculiar offices they were called on to fulfil; without the slightest knowledge of the wants of a sick bed, from which they themselves had only recently been released. Some few, nevertheless, were worthy of all praise. I much fear, however, that the greater portion, placed in a position so novel, took advantage of offered temptations, and gave way to drink; thus becoming worse than useless themselves, and embarrassing others. In fact, there was no avail—there is no avail in hiding defects, if they are to be remedied for the

future; though happily all these evils are passed, God grant for ever! The effects, however, remain, unhappily leaving many a heart to mourn in bitterness.

It is not a lavish expenditure of money—it is not haste of selection or influence, but efficiency, which ought to command place or power, and then it matters little whether from the aristocracy or the people. Neither the one nor the other ought to debar a candidate for the public service—neither the one nor the other command it if he be not qualified.

A few talented, energetic medical men, might readily have been found, and have, in fact, since been found, either civil or military, who would have saved much misery. But, unfortunately in the East as elsewhere, the men who have done all the work, and who still do it, are not always discovered, and others, not seldom, reap the advantages due to them. And so is it possibly throughout the events of life.

A corps of hospital orderlies, selected from

each of our naval and military hospitals in England, if not in sufficient number of themselves to perform the duties, would at least have been enabled to instruct others. And being well-tried and respectable men, would have been far more serviceable, less expensive, and tenfold less troublesome than untried orderlies, selected in haste and at hazard.*

I was credibly informed, and know it to be fact, that in the early part of the year, when I first visited the East, that abundance of every species of valuable necessaries for the army, both as regards effective men, as the sick and wounded, remained for days, nay weeks, on board the vessels which brought them out from England, it being no person's, or every person's, duty to receive them; or that Mr. Brown refused to give an order till countersigned by Mr. Jones; Jones in like manner awaiting the authority of Smith. And what is still more strange, that at the very

* Since the above was written, I am told the Minister of War has established, or is establishing, a most efficient corps.

moment complaints were being made, the army was ill-provided.

The market at Balaklava was so over-stocked, that cargoes were actually bought up to be sent back to England and re-sold at a profit. It is to be hoped, however, that we have had a lesson,—terrible though the effects, which henceforth will remedy such evils. And if so be it is God's will that our noble army is still doomed to suffer, either in the battle-field or from disease, England will know how best to give that aid to mitigate its sufferings, as well as to save many valuable lives.

At the period of my first visiting the hospitals at Scutari and Kulalee in January last, they were filled to overflowing, not with wounded soldiers, but sufferers from dysentery, fever, and frost-bitten limbs. In the latter case their position was most pitiable—generally ending, if not in successful amputation, in mortification and death. During the time I was present in the barrack

hospital, several poor fellows arrived in this state from Balaklava; as also others labouring under fever and dysentery. It would be ridiculous to assert that there was anything bordering on cheerfulness in the countenances of these poor soldiers: but having undergone the welcome ordeal of a warm bath and clean linen, and been laid helpless as children in bed, the nurses having supplied them with some fitting nourishment or temporary restorative, to which, alas! they had long been unaccustomed; there shone forth an expression of renewed hope, calm resignation, and gratitude, in the knowledge they would be well cared for, which went straight to the heart. Comfort, indeed, must they have experienced, poor fellows, at being relieved from the filth and vermin in which for so many months they had actually existed. In the middle of February, the hospitals were almost entirely free from wounded men. Quite so from those who had fought and bled at the glorious battles of Alma, Inkerman,

and Balaklava. But Miss Nightingale most justly and most touchingly observed to me, that the nature of her duties was far more sad.

The wounded soldier, she observed, returning from the glories of a victory in which he has taken part, may, and does not seldom suffer physical torments hard to endure; but in the midst of these torments, bright feelings, cheerfulness, knowledge of duties well performed, hoped-for reward, and gratitude of his country, one and all tend to support him. And even in the midst of torture, his eye is bright and his courage high.

But fever, and dysentery, and frost-bitten limbs, are sufferings of a totally different nature. They subdue the spirit, utterly prostrate all physical powers, leaving the sufferer a mere inanimate human being, who, as day by day he witnesses a comrade carried to his last home, eventually sinks himself, without energy or strength to sustain him.

Such was the position in which I found our sick in the months of January and February. And with the exception of frost-bitten wounds, their sufferings are similar now. But it is a source of gladness to be enabled to assert that the sufferers are diminished by three-fourths, and the deaths are one-twentieth in proportion. Gladness, indeed, for alike amid the lordly homes, as in the rural cottages of merry England, high and low, rich and poor, there are some hearts which beat in unison with those who are fighting our battles in the East.

That the hospitals of our Allies have been more efficient, their system better, their comforts greater at the earlier period of the campaign there, admits of no question. And it would be well for us, in some things, to take advantage of their mode of administration in this department, as in some others as regards military affairs. Such, however, is decidedly not the case at present. And in proportion, though they have

a careful habit of silence at times, doubtless very desirable, my conviction is, they have suffered to the full as much as we have.

Since the month of June, with a firmness of heart and nobleness of purpose unsurpassed, Miss Nightingale has been induced to proceed to the seat of war in the cause of suffering humanity. Unhappily while there, probably from over-exertion, or from her fearless mode of mixing with fever and pestilence in a noble desire to aid the sick, she has herself been attacked with severe fever.

Europe, however, has now the satisfaction of knowing that she is all but recovered. And it is to be hoped that God will take her in His safe keeping, that she may be enabled to fulfil to the end that mission which she has so long and with such Christian zeal hitherto performed; though her friends — in which it is to be hoped all England may be numbered—would desire that she return at once to the more healthy climate of her native home.

The following slight extract from the "Illustrated News," in reference to the hospitals in the Crimea, will have their interest:—

"This excellent lady has, during her stay at Balaklava, visited the Camp Hospitals, and examined the arrangements in each. Throughout her inspection she was warmly greeted by the soldiers. On one of these visits Miss Nightingale went up to the Hut Hospitals, on the Castle (or Genoese) Heights, on business, and escorted by Mr. Bracebridge, one of the chaplains, Captain Keane, R.E., Dr. Sutherland, a sergeant's guard, a boy, and eight Croats, carrying baggage for the hospital. The party wound up a steep path from the harbour under the old castle, which scene an artistic correspondent has enabled us to represent in the accompanying illustration.

"One week afterwards our correspondent saw the humane lady carried up to the same spot on a litter. The hospital huts, twelve in number, stand against the limestone cliffs. On the

mountain-side are the Marines, Rifles, and Turks; the harbour on one side, the steep cliffs where the Prince was lost on the other. The Genoese Castle rises in a lofty crag in front: the site is 700 feet or more above the sea, and is very airy and healthy — admirably adapted for its purposes. Here is placed Miss Nightingale's hut, beyond a small stream, the water of which is excellent, and the banks are enamelled with gay flowers. There is room for at least 800 wounded, with the best chance of recovery."

At the hour I write nothing can exceed the order, comfort, nay, luxury, if such word can be used in reference to the Eastern hospitals, as regards the soldiers. It is strange to say, however, though true, that our officers, who have so signally distinguished themselves, are cruelly neglected in regard to their comforts, when sickness or wounds compel them to seek shelter at Scutari.

CHAPTER X.

THE mail-boats of the Messageric Impériale leave Constantinople on their return to Marseilles on the Monday and Thursday of each week; that is, on the days similar to their departure from France. The vessel which leaves on Monday takes the line of the Piræus and Messina, touching by the way at Gallipoli, the Dardanelles, and the two former places, remaining several hours at each; whereas the boat which leaves on Thursday, having also anchored at Gallipoli and the Dardanelles, diverges towards Smyrna, where, having remained the best portion of the day, it proceeds, by Syra and Malta, to Marseilles. In each case the Straits of the Dardanelles are, of course, passed; and thus the

traveller has a sight of Sestos and Abydos Tenedos, and the plains of Troy.

How strange are the events of life! But yesterday a practical knowledge of all these places was for the most part as a closed book to the multitude. To-day there is scarcely a master of an English transport to whom they are not as familiar land-marks; while to almost every officer of the army and the navy, as to thousands of our wandering countrymen, they are looked on as one looks on Greenwich and Gravesend: yet probably with less interest, for many a pleasant recollection is roused up in memory of agreeable white-bait dinners at the former, and many a friendly face comes back to mind who then shared the pleasures of the hour. It is said, and with much truth, that familiarity breeds contempt. As regards the East, war has evidently had this desirable effect on poetical imaginations, contact having for the most part annihilated aught but hard fact; and it is well that it should be so, that grumblers may learn there

is no climate, take it throughout the year, like that of Old England; little that can surpass the natural and luxuriant richness of its green and beautiful landscapes. Nothing like the joy and peace of home, and that home an English one.

True is it, that there are blue and bright skies in the East, at periods, alike in mid-winter as in midsummer. True is it, there are calm blue seas, mountains and plains; islands and cities pleasant to look on, if not pleasing to inhabit; but, to speak truly, they are the exceptions to the general rule; and I have had some experience, inasmuch as I have travelled from England to Constantinople no less than eight times since the 12th of January last to this present time. And if these bright blue seas and brilliant skies, of which so many rave, are to be seen; why, for the most part, it may be added, that those who visit them are grilled in summer, in winter frozen. Nevertheless, it would be almost impossible, when steaming through the Dardanelles, with Sestos on the one hand and Abydos on the other, not

to recur to the recollection of Lord Byron's swimming across the Hellespont. As regards all interest, I must confess that it is vain that one calls on Imagination to nullify the fact of both the one place as the other being, as far as they are individually concerned, most exceedingly dirty little villages, without one charm of nature, save it be the sea which laves them, and the hills which form their background, to cause the eye to rest on them with aught of interest or pleasure, or to reclaim them from insignificance. And as for the feat of swimming across the Hellespont, although the current is remarkably rapid, I will venture to find a hundred lads in England who shall undertake it without preparation. Yet one condoles with Leander, that he could not provide himself with a boat, and still more, that the fate of love, as not seldom is the fate of war, should have caused his death; and although I am ready to give Lord Byron and Mr. Ekenhead all the credit of being first-rate swimmers, I must

own that Abydos has far more interest to me in this the year 1855, than either his lordship or Mr. E., or even Xerxes, has hitherto created, from the simple fact of an hospital having been established there for the sick and wounded of our noble army.

On the 3d of May a friend, or possibly I ought to say a gentleman,* in whose opinion I have much reliance, writes thus:—"Beneath the steep acclivity where Xerxes is said to have sat and reviewed his myriads before crossing the Hellespont, nestled close under the green hill-side, stands the smallest and least extensive of our military hospitals in the East. An appendage formerly to the Turkish quarantine establishment, now occupied by our Allies as an hospital, from which it is removed about a quarter of a mile. It was adapted for its present purpose early in the winter, and has since received within its walls 720 patients. As to the site, first impressions would by no means pronounce favour-

* Since dead.

ably of it. But the experience of the country people seems to modify here the common principle of selection, since it declares the sea-shore to be a healthier locality than the heights which rise from it. The plain of Kidera, on which the Persian marshalled his forces, is now a swamp, but the intervening hills obstruct the egress of the malaria, and stand as a wall of defence between our invalids and the marsh-fever. The building is merely a double line of sheds, hastily converted from a storehouse into a sanitarium, and divided into fourteen wards; its most irremediable fault being that one of these ranges is placed behind the other, and has therefore no direct access to the sea-breezes. A remediable one, that it is enclosed on every side, flank and rear, by stone walls; of which, however, the portion facing the strait is in course of demolition. Both from its presumed character as a place for convalescents, and from its distance from head-quarters, it has been left very much to take care of itself. It is an offshoot from

Scutari, little recognised by its parent institution. The care of its original construction devolved upon the British Consul at the Dardanelles, and the charge of it has rested entirely with Dr. Jamieson, who had no other staff than two medical officers to support him. Moreover, for a long time there was no Protestant clergyman, and there never has been a nurse." This was in May.

Happily, however, most happily, great improvement has taken place even as regards this small and temporary hospital; and in time nothing that could tend to the comfort of its inmates, or the general efficiency of the hospital or its staff, was found wanting.

CHAPTER XI.

It is by no means my intention to impose on my readers a description of each place at which chance and the service I perform may have caused me to touch; with the exception of those more immediately connected with the war, and more particularly with relation to the English army. Again and again, poets, painters, and authors, have vied with each other in laudation of Eastern landscape and Eastern charms; and have contrived to throw around the most trifling beauties a halo of admiration which, as far as I am individually concerned, I confess scarcely ever having been enabled, in a similar degree, to discover. Nevertheless, I am myself an amateur artist, and I would break a lance with all

the world who denied my ardent love for Nature's beauties. But let us look at things soberly, and as they really are, not through the medium of imagination, or the mere feelings inspired at the first moment, not seldom very deceptive, whatever they may be, whether of pleasure or the reverse. Smyrna, then, I must confess, has many natural charms and great advantages of position in every respect. Moreover, at this moment it is a spot replete with interest, — one of our best and largest military hospitals having recently been established there. And I by no means deny that it goes fast to merit the Turkish appellation of Ismar, queen of the cities of Anatolia, ever extolled by the ancients as lovely,—the crown of Jouia, the ornament of Asia. Yet, like most other Eastern towns on the coast, it owes much to the beauty of the bay which laves and refreshes its shores. In fact, there, as elsewhere in the dominions of the "Light of the World," the habitations of man are most picturesque and most pleasing in the distance. Nevertheless, as a town, speaking compa-

ratively, it is far more pleasant to look on, and far more agreeable as a residence, than Constantinople. The streets are cleaner and broader, the houses for the most part built of stone, and well suited to the climate; and every necessary of life is there to be had, or, I should speak more truthfully by saying, was to be had previous to the war, in great reason of price and abundance, particularly so as regards vegetables and fruit of the finest. Early in May, I walked through the market, which was abundantly and well supplied with green peas, broad beans, lettuces, vegetable-marrow, and all other vegetables common in England in July. The meat and fish-market appeared to be equally well supplied. There are also well-established clubs, reading-rooms, and coffee-houses, looking on the bay, where the French papers, as also "Galignani's" and the "Illustrated News," are received each week.

In the month of February last, I fancy, having been the bearer of the Sultan's firman directing that the principal barrack at Smyrna should be

given up for the purpose of being converted into an hospital for our troops, I had also the pleasure of travelling with Colonel Powell of the 57th Regiment, who, after serving with honour throughout the glories of the campaign, having been promoted, by order of Lord Raglan, was then proceeding there to establish a military hospital.

On my return, in the month of March, I found that, notwithstanding the short period he had been in command, together with innumerable difficulties to contend with, by energy and system he had already converted the barracks into a very efficient hospital, where more than three hundred of our poor sick and wounded soldiers, benefiting by the change from the more crowded hospital at Scutari, were fast approaching convalescence. I can scarcely fancy that it was a misfortune to Colonel Powell that he has since been promoted to the more active and soldier-like, if not more responsible position, of commanding the 53d Regiment now in India; and in justice to

the present Commandant of Smyrna, Colonel Storks,* I must admit, that when I again visited Asia, in May as in June, I found that he had left nothing undone which zeal and efficient measures could produce to complete the work which his brother-soldier had ably commenced. And, aided by the great experience and admirable system of Dr. Meyer, the chief medical superintendent, the hospital of Smyrna may fairly be ranked in comfort and effectiveness with any military hospital in Europe. All is arranged and provided for in the most systematic and convenient manner, everything required for the comfort and well-being of its suffering inmates at hand and abundantly supplied, the rooms and corridors fresh and airy, and for the most part well ventilated and lofty. The wards are neither too crowded, nor are the berths too near together; though in regard to this matter, as Dr. Meyer explained to me, it was immaterial, if the height of the apartment was

* Since deservedly promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General, and sent to Scutari as Commandant.

sufficient to admit of a free circulation of air. In fact, I may fairly assert there was little, if anything, to be desired that was not there or to be had. But above all, that which most forcibly struck me was the position of the hospital itself. But yesterday a barrack, said to be capable of accommodation of at least 1000 Turks,—which it well might be, considering how Turks are quartered; to-day it is an English asylum of a most convenient nature for 500 of our sick and suffering countrymen, who had left England and home to do battle in a war of justice and civilisation.

Immediately without, or as it were consecutively with the thickly-populated town, it stands almost alone on the immediate shore of the wide and beautiful bay of Smyrna, the sea-breezes from which constantly cool and refresh its chambers; protected by lofty hills and a dark cypress-grove, which, though indicative of death, is productive of life, by throwing back the light airs of summer, which even during the greatest heats are prevalent, as also preventing malaria. Built in the

form of an oblong, the side towards the sea entirely open, an iron railing closing in a spacious court; the whole length of sea-wall against which the waters beat, and from which steps descend, enables communication with the aristocratic, as, indeed, with the whole portion of the town, by boat. This prevents the necessity of walking through hot and crowded streets — an inconceivable advantage to those whose duties oblige them to pass to and fro. Smyrna is, in fact, by no means an unpleasant Eastern abiding-place, where men and maidens are given to hospitality and pleasure as well as duty: for there, as elsewhere, the pleasant English custom of pic-nicing, or dining under the fig-trees, answering all the purposes of oaks to English lads and lasses, is resorted to during the hot weather, as are balls and soirées constant recreations during the cooler season.

I was dozing one morning in my cabin at a very early hour — for we had just come to anchor in the calm bay, after a somewhat rough night,

my window being open to admit the cool morning breezes—when a boat came alongside, and I heard an English voice demand, if Sayah was on board. On receiving a reply in the affirmative, a young English officer, whose family was well known to me at home, forthwith knocked at my cabin-door, and with that eagerness so natural under present circumstances, solicited intelligence from the seat of war, or the City of the Sultan. Having replied to his inquiries, I felt it necessary to apologise that I should be found sleeping away the fresh hours of morning after sunrise with land close at hand; for I confess to a natural distaste to the wide ocean, under all and every circumstance—calm or rough, summer or winter, in man-of-war or steam-vessel—much as I love to watch its changing beauties from the wood-clad heights which surround my much-loved home.

"We are not ever such early risers, even at Smyrna," he replied; "but this morning I have taken time by the forelock, as we contemplate nothing less than a pic-nic to the neighbouring

village of Bournahat, and I trust you will be enabled to join our party."

Having explained my regret at the necessity of refusing so pleasant an offer, inasmuch as the vessel started again for Syra in the afternoon, and I had in the interim many duties to perform, he kindly pressed his invitation, by the assurance that they had formed a party of twenty, all English, one-half of ladies fair; moreover, that cold pies, and lobster-salads, and iced champagne, were provided in abundance for the occasion—all to be conveyed in Eastern fashion on the back of a camel, which said camel should have the honour of conveying me back to the port in no time. But all was of no avail, go I could not. Moreover, the very idea of a camel-ride, after partaking of the abundance provided, brought to mind so forcibly the rolling sea of the night previous, that, had time permitted me even to hesitate as to my decision, the latter generous offer would have decided the question in the negative. Yet, go where you will, whether it be to the east

or the west, the north or the south, Englishmen are there found ready when duty is over to follow out the customs and pleasures of Old England. Thus we have races at Balaklava in sound of the cannons' roar—shooting-parties in the interior of countries where men's hands are free with the knife—and pic-nics in Smyrna. And why not?

When I mention Smyrna being more Eastern than Constantinople, I allude more particularly to the present than to the past, inasmuch as it would be difficult for any one who has visited the City of the Sultan in other days, when landing there at this period of fierce contention with Russia, to convince himself that he was anywhere that belonged to any particular nation upon earth, save it be to France. For the streets of Pera, at least, are thronged by a motley crowd, denoting, particularising, and offering specimens, strange though they be, of almost every country under the sun. English and French—the latter in great majority—Greeks and Sardinians, Jews and Gentiles, Germans and Italians, throng the

streets, from sunrise to sunset, of that now hot, now cold, now filthy, now dry and dusty, sad-hearted and demoralised city. Officers in gay uniforms, gentlemen, travellers, and merchants, in every species of costume; turbaned Turks and high-capped Armenians, ladies in French bonnets of the newest fashion and ankle-boots, of the neatest make, flowers flounced and feathered, —step daintily across the dirty gutters which flow mid-way through the narrow streets, not seldom drenched by the offpourings of the over-hanging roofs which half cover the public way, in strange contrast to the detestable costume of the Turkish women, who, muffled up as it were in swaddling-clothes, shuffle in yellow-slippered boots through mud and mire, dirt and dust,—all being jostled and screeched at by innumerable Armenian hammals or porters, who carry on their strong shoulders inconceivable burdens—in fact, men who perform the duties of beasts of burden, whether donkey or mule.

This heterogeneous and moving mass, dense as

is the crowd in the Strand in the hours of business during the London season, probably more so, is relieved occasionally by the appearance of a well-dressed, well-bearded, well-mounted, and handsome Pacha, who, apparently regardless of the multitude through whose opening masses he passes, sits calmly on his richly-caparisoned and well-shaped little steed, which steps out proudly as if conscious of its beauty, or the honour of his burden, an attendant running by his side; ladies and children with pale faces hidden by the yashman in gilded carriages, the driver of which conducts the horses while on foot himself. Dogs in abundance sleeping mid-day in the sun, or on door-steps, or snarling at one another over some already well-picked bone or nauseous offal, close the strange picture of moving life at Constantinople.

Strange picture, indeed, and doubtless not without interest to him who for the first time lands at Tophana, but an intolerable nuisance to him who is called on by duty or business to perambulate

the streets of that wooden city. But far more painfully touching and disgusting than all, particularly to the heart and eye of an Englishman, is the constant passing and repassing of Greek funerals. Priests chanting in front, dirty, ragged boys bawling behind the corpse, which, laid on a bier bedecked with but scanty covering, according to the position of the defunct, leaves the livid face entirely exposed to the view of the passers-by—a disgusting sight, to say the least of it, to living eye, not seldom causing infection, always causing emotion. Nevertheless, it is the custom of the Greek Church ever thus to carry their dead to the grave a few hours only subsequent to life being extinct—a custom each hour repeated in the streets of Pera; conveying to the minds of the passers-by, whether bent on business or pleasure, thoughts the most repulsive and feelings the most sad, doubly so at a period when disease and the fate of war have made so many a home and heart in Old England desolate.

There is little or nothing of all this at Smyrna.

The stately camel, with his heavy burden of fruit, vegetables, charcoal, or merchandise from the interior, marches in measured pace through the bazaars and streets, and at once reminds you that you are in the land of the East. The costume of the inhabitants, as their habits, are far more Eastern, their manners more cordial and courteous, their picturesque appearance far more interesting, and the fig-tree and the sycamore blended with the olive and the palm, contrasting their fresh green with the dark cypress, scattered throughout the various gardens of the town, add alike beauty and coolness to a scene for which Nature has done so much.

I should be wanting, alike in courtesy to the Smyrniote as in some slight degree to my readers, did I quit the land without saying one word in reference to the Bridge of Caravans—a locality which is not only one of interest and pleasure to the inhabitants and temporary residents, but which is visited by every stranger. I regret, however, that the utmost stretch of my imagina-

tion, together with a desire to do justice to all places which I may have visited during my several journeys to the East, did not enable me to discover any cause for unusual excitement or admiration; yet, strange to say, poet, painter, and historian, as the common voice, have one and all succeeded in converting the most commonplace locality, as far as natural beauty is concerned, into a very garden of Eden. My time being limited, however, it is just possible that I might have failed to discover some hidden charms; at all events, that which I did see and have since seen on several occasions may be seen in tenfold beauty, in fifty spots, (barring the camels) which are never visited, within a hundred miles of London.

This celebrated bridge,—which, by the by, has been considerably destroyed by the recent addition of a rough iron balustrade, from the fact of a camel having fallen over its low protecting walls into a sort of basin below; and which little mistake on his part was forthwith voluntarily per-

formed by a whole string of his companions who followed in his wake,—a feat which resulted solely in the advantages of a cold bath,—spans the river Meles—if river it can be called—and therefrom, I conceive, derives its interest.

It is, in fact, a mere mountain stream, its bed half choked with sand and gravel, that portion near the bridge being used as a halting-place for the numerous caravans which enter the city of Smyrna by that the only route from the interior; though possibly not more than two miles distant, if so much, from the centre of the town—in fact, contiguous to its environs.

The day being intensely hot, as is the custom of the *beau monde* in the East, I followed the example of my betters, and rode thereto on a donkey, about the best it was ever my good fortune to become personally acquainted with. And as I am certainly of opinion that even donkey-riding is preferable to the best vessel in the world on a rough sea, my little excursion was by no means unpleasant, save that when my donkey-

driver, who was a Greek, exclaimed, Βηέιτε τὸ γεφύρι! "Behold the bridge!" my disappointment was great, and I turned away to inspect a sort of customhouse-box, where sat, in the performance of his duties, one of those zeibecs with whose general appearance Eastern pictures have made us so familiar. On his head he wore a high conical turban, while his short and voluminous nether garments, of white calico, contained pockets, somewhat approaching the rear, of sufficient size to store away sundry quartern loaves; this formidable girdle being filled with pistols and daggers sufficient to have armed a dozen stalwart soldiers; the handles richly inlaid with silver and gilding, or maybe gold — for it is cheap when obtained by the picking of a pocket. Nevertheless, the bare legs of this doubtless important personage, as also his roguish-looking face, I am not aware of his rank, were of a bright copper colour. I could not help admiring the perfect opinion he appeared to entertain of himself as of his position, still more so the easy

indolence of two or three of his followers, who, doubtless, very honest men in their calling, indolently reclined on a wooden seat, having far more the air of banditti than custom-house officers. In fact, these worthy officials formed the subject for a picture which struck me as more worth seeing than the locality so greatly vaunted. Immediately on one of the banks of the river are clustered a few large plantain-trees, under the shade of which a coffee-house is established. The Caravan Bridge being the principal resort of idlers from the city, these trees form one of the beauties of the place, beneath the shade of which they drink raki and dream away life in a cloud of tobacco-smoke; while on the other, some very fine cypresses denote, — as ever in the East, — a burial-ground, overshadowing innumerable painted, broken, and gilded tombstones.

Thus briefly have I described the Caravan Bridge. The portion of the picture which interested me more than all else being a score or more of camels, with their heavy burdens still on

their backs, reposing by the side of the stream; while their drivers formed a gipsy encampment in the dry bed of the river.

Smyrna, in fact, — and I write it with full confidence in the just grounds on which I make the assertion, — is, probably, of all other places connected with the seat of war, that on which the eye of those, whoever they may be, who rule the State should be fixed. It is a place of vast resource and vast importance, and will not only become more so, but assured am I, that our gallant Allies are so well aware of this fact, that had not the Sultan (God save him!) in a moment when under the influences of a narguillet—the charms of which I shall hereafter describe—exclaimed: "Allah! these sickly English dogs shall go there;" and, accordingly, sent his high and mighty orders to the effect that the fine barracks should be evacuated; they would have had the wisdom long since of establishing themselves there. The tricolor would have floated over the barracks, and their convalescents, await-

ing the period of re-embarkation to the seat of war, would have been employed in making roads into the interior, and thus opening out the means of conveying the produce of a country, the internal resources of which are rich and abundant beyond all conception. Roads alone are wanting to make it, if not a priceless possession, at least a harbour of resources in itself sufficient to supply the whole of our forces in the East. Of one thing I am assured,—I write in all courtesy, but in truth,—if England do not hold its own there, France will. I speak solely as regards its position to supply, residential and mercantile advantages. And who can blame them? At Balaklava a very efficient and available hospital is now established. Scutari is already, and with much reason, pronounced to be an unhealthy locality; it is ill drained, and although standing on an eminence, where it enjoys the breezes from the Sea of Marmora, it is covered—almost hemmed in, as it were—by that which to the eye at first appears as dense and

extensive groves of cypresses; but which is a charnel-house to which millions have been carried as their last resting-place, and the pestilential air of which taints the atmosphere. Kulalee, situated in a hot basin, and worse drained than Scutari, offers still less sanatorial advantages; while little can be said either of Hyder Pasha or the general hospital as regards their salubrity. In the meantime, the small hospital at Abydos offers no accommodation, and its disadvantages certainly outnumber its advantages. True that the Government have selected a site at Rankioi, not far distant from the town of the Dardanelles, commanding the waters of the Hellespont, which I was given to understand was in all respects suitable for the erection of an hospital; and this, under the superintendence of a civil engineer, is daily advancing towards completion. When built, it will accommodate three thousand invalids; but having this most desirable hospital completed, I repeat, that of Smyrna ought not to be aban-

doned, although ardently may it be hoped that the corridors of neither will ever be filled.

With reference to our military hospitals in Turkey in this the month of September, practical information enables me to state, that Scutari immediately preceding the fall of Sebastopol contained about 3000 patients, was in admirable order, and had a most efficient staff, both medical and military.

Miss Nightingale, notwithstanding her recent severe illness, still remained to carry out to the end her Christian labours ; while Brigadier-General Storks had replaced Lord William Paulet, who succeeds to the command of a brigade at the seat of war.

Of the civil hospitals, Abydos was empty. At Rankioi accommodation was already prepared for 750 patients, and it will ere long be in a fit state to receive three thousand.

The civil staff is composed of: —

1 Superintendent.

2 Physicians.

1 Surgeon.

And about twenty Assistant-Physicians and Surgeons.

As yet, however, no patients have been admitted within the building; at least, up to the 25th of September.

At Smyrna, the medical force at the same period consisted of: —

1 Superintendent—and a most able one is he.

3 Physicians.

4 Surgeons.

6 Assistant-Physicians.

10 Assistant-Surgeons.

1 Resident Medical Officer.

This hospital can accommodate 520 patients, and the lazaretto, within a mile of it on the seashore, 420 convalescents.

Several of these medical officers are under orders for the Crimea, as there were barely a score of patients remaining at the end of September in the hospital.

As, however, Brigadier Storks is fully alive to the advantages of the Smyrna establishment—its sole disadvantage being the distance from the army in the field, and, after all, it is only twelve hours further than Rankioi — he will, doubtless, soon send the wherewith from Scutari to fill its corridors.

Having said so much of Smyrna and its hospitals, I cannot dismiss it without adding a word in reference to its fig-commerce,—a far different, yet most important subject to all Smyrniotes.

"I do not care a 'fig for you,' 'a fig for her,' or 'a fig for it,'" is by no means an uncommon expression in Old England. It would be far better applied at Smyrna, where, during the season of picking, packing, and exporting, they are as plentiful as hailstones after a storm. Moreover, there is scarcely an English schoolboy, or, at least, some member of an English family, but who places far too great a value on a good luscious box of figs to make light of them. I

would desire, however, for the benefit of those who may be curious in such matters, to give a simple account of that branch of mercantile enterprise, so valuable to the merchants of Smyrna, and so much prized throughout Europe and America.

In the first place I may observe, that the dried fig which is exported from Smyrna is by no means externally the same fig as that which grows against the walls and in the gardens of England and France; for the most part they are scarcely so large, certainly not of so high a flavour. Moreover, their outward skin is white instead of purple; they are cultivated in great abundance throughout Asia Minor, and are becoming more and more celebrated as a source of commercial wealth.

I have read and heard from time to time, that the preparation of figs for the European market was a sight as unpleasing for the eye to behold as the stomach to endure. I confess having witnessed the whole process from first

to last, without discovering anything of the sort. The figs being perfectly ripe, fall unaided from the tree; they are then carefully picked up and partially dried; thence packed in coarse horse-hair bags, previously containing the leaf of the sweet bay-tree.

It is by no means uncommon to meet a string of fifty camels, each carrying several of these bags to Smyrna. On their arrival they are taken to the Custom House, weighed, and the duty paid to the authorities; one-half, if not two-thirds of which, probably, finds its way into the pockets of the pasha in office; and thence sold by public competition in the fig bazaar to the merchants who export them.

The figs are subsequently taken from the bags and placed in dry stores, precisely similar to the mode of storing wheat or beans, and thence with wooden shovels placed in flat baskets or trays. Women in numbers are then employed in sorting the finest and largest figs from the smallest. This process over, they are

given to men, who sit together in scores, having a pail of salt water and sweet bay-leaves between them; into which, from time to time, they dip their fingers, then squeeze the fig into proper shape, and pack it carefully into the box or drum in which it is exported.

Formerly the drum was the only form of box in which they were forwarded to Europe. In the present day, the fig, as the raisin, sultana, and French plum, have found their way into every species of attractive box, whether of wood or card-board, that can be imagined.

Once enclosed in boxes, the fig is said to ferment; and it is also asserted that a small worm discharges itself from the end of each fig.

I have more than once bought a small, perfectly fresh-packed box, solely to observe this process; but in so far as my observations have gone, I have seen nothing of the kind.

Nevertheless, it is positively said that the decks of the merchant-vessels which convey the figs to England, France, and America, are ma-

tutinally covered with these little animals, which are swept away in multitudes; where they come from, I know not. Under any circumstance they are said to be a proof of the richness and flavour of the fig; therefore, the more the merrier, as they leave the fig ere it becomes a European luxury.

I may add, in reference to Smyrna, that a melancholy and villainous outrage took place there in the month of June last, which most urgently demands the attention of the Turkish authorities, as indeed does it that of the British representatives in the East. It would be scarcely desirable that I entered into minute details in reference to this rascally occurrence. Suffice, that at mid-day of the Sabbath, Dr. M'Craith, a most respectable medical gentleman, who has long resided and practised professionally at Smyrna, was forcibly ejected by a party of armed Greek brigands, within a few miles of the town, brutally and cruelly treated, the murder of an aged Turk perpetrated before his eyes, and he

himself carried to the mountains, where, having been detained for a week by these savages, he was permitted to return to his home and family on the payment of a ransom of 400*l*. Roads being made into the interior, commercial enterprise increased, civilisation extended, and the Greek banditti utterly annihilated by active and honest authorities, such atrocities would soon cease to be enacted. At present, it is lamentable to add that which every one asserts as fact—simply, that the Greek merchants are themselves the indirect and secret supporters of those capable of committing atrocities sufficient to blot out Greece as among civilised nations—acts which they coolly speak of as political offences.

In the case of poor Dr. M'Craith—possibly the most inoffensive man in Smyrna—the wretches themselves admit it was not their intention to seize him, as, so far from being offensive, he had been universally kind to the poor and sick of the district; but the wrong,

fish got into their net. The military commander, or chief medical officer of the hospital, was the man they were on the look-out for; and, absurd as it may appear, they asserted to the Doctor, during his forced captivity, that, had they been sufficiently fortunate to have caught either of the above-named authorities, they could have obtained a ransom of 10,000*l*. "The Queen of England gives the Sultan millions—she can afford 10,000*l*. for her pashas." Such was the language used. It is to be hoped the British Government will recompense the loss sustained by one who is ill able to afford it.

CHAPTER XII.

Ere quitting the East, I cannot resist some few curious details in reference to the perhaps too exciting, yet, nevertheless, luxuriant indulgence of smoking; they may tend to amuse, if not to instruct, those who live at home at ease, and who are given to the soothing habit, whether in the shape of a narcotic weed, in cigarette or pipe. For the most part, I received them from an intelligent fellow-traveller, a merchant who had invested somewhat largely as regards meerschaum in the rough, which he had discovered at Smyrna.

In the matter of smoking, as in many other habits, it is strange, but, unhappily, not the less true, that those who inhabit the banks of the

Thames are greatly imitating, if not surpassing, those who puff away half their existence on the shores of the Bosphorus: it would, probably, be well were the picture not faithful; nevertheless, so is it. In days "lang syne," to have been seen at daylight in the streets, more particularly of London, with a cigar in one's mouth, would, to say the least of it, have been considered bad taste. And as for a pipe—save it were a meerschaum, silver-mounted, or even gilded, and of the first quality, to be coloured by use and age, with care and in private snuggeries — it was a luxury known only to coal-heavers, hackney-coachmen, the Irish peasantry at home, and to German students, and for the most part to our Continental neighbours, abroad. But, as the French justly observe, in their own very explanatory language, "*Tout cela est changé;*" whether for good or evil, who can say? After all, I speak only of the matter of smoke. The pipe in the mouth of a Frenchman, whether military or civil, is now the exception rather than the rule; or, if I must write it,

though I detest the word,—not the "fashion." Cigars and cigarettes, in the formation of which they are becoming as expert as Spaniards, have become the pleasure of their existence, if not an absolute necessity; while pipes remain, for the most part, in the hands of the lower class. So is it in regard to Germany. The large meerschaum of the German scholar, as of the higher class, as of the middling class, heretofore the most cared-for treasure—ere they possessed the cigar and cigarette—to which even wife and loved one gave place, is now all but banished; while Young England, but yesterday given solely to Havannahs—and those of the best, if he could get them, one out of a hundred only being smokers at all—now lead the van in all questions of tobacco, always excepting the inhabitants of the East, to whom now, as ever, the custom, as its use, is as their daily bread in all matters appertaining to the indulgence of the exciting herb.

In the days we live, whether it be in London or the country, in-doors or out-of-doors, in the

hunting-field in winter, as on the race-course, or in any other place of out-door amusement during summer, there will you see every other male subject of her Majesty Queen Victoria, who has a decent coat on his back, with a pipe in his mouth. The form, size, and nature of the article, varies according to the taste of the owner; but the more common, the shorter, the blacker, the more apparently worthless, the cheapest to the eye of him who is not a connoisseur of what it ought to be, so does it become of greater value to the owner. In fact, the habit is come to this point:—"Of course, you smoke a pipe after breakfast? Suppose we have one pipe before we dress for dinner?" The after-dinner pipe is a matter as absolutely necessary as the dinner itself. And few place their heads to rest on their pillows at night without a good smoke. Sayah seldom does, save to please himself; a proof that he is one of the most unselfish and amiable of human beings.

Bad as may be the habit, however, and, as

many declare it, detrimental to the health, though doctors differ on this point, it has most unquestionably had the effect of diminishing the taste for drinking. I, Sayah, confess to be a smoker myself, and while smoking I never drink anything but water. And although I meet daily with smokers, and during my travels have met with some thousands of habitual and incessant smokers, I never yet met with the man, though others perchance have done so, who smoked and was a drunkard. And happily the fair sex, the joy and companions of our existence, have at length found out that the custom, after all, is not so very dirty, not half so bad as snuffing; the interior of the mouth — that expressive medium for uttering all the most practically endearing sentiments of love and friendship—can be washed, not so the interior of the nose. Add to which, they honestly admit the truth, the most handsome of Roman or Grecian noses is destroyed sooner or later by snuffing, but smoking preserves the teeth. And, after all, there is nothing very

dirty in a habit whose influences cause the most agreeable sensations; not that the most determined English smoker would desire that his fair countrywomen should follow their example, though the Sultan's favourites are given to narguillets, Irish peasant-women to dhudeens, and Armenian women to cigarettes. It was my ill-fortune to be a fellow-traveller with one of the latter, who, I was informed, was noble by birth, and an heiress; she might, and doubtless was, all that my informant stated; nevertheless, her hair was cropped like that of a man, and she appeared each hour of the day on deck without a hat or bonnet, and a cigar in her mouth. It was her taste, and no one had a right to interfere, still she had not the equal right to spoil my dinner, which she did diurnally, having no nail-scissors or nail-brush on board, and soap was evidently a luxury unknown to her. In a house the question is more complicated. A room must be set apart for the purpose, but even there love and friendship will creep in and discover that,

if not too strong, the perfume of tobacco is delicious.

I am writing nothing but fact when I declare my belief that smoking is becoming day by day more prevalent in the land we live in than in any other but the East; while the consumption of tobacco increases, no doubt but that of strong liquors greatly diminishes. Six times during the last eight months I have travelled through France to Marseilles, and then by steamer to Constantinople. During each of these journeys I have met with hundreds of French and English officers proceeding to, and returning from, the East. Among the English I do not at the moment recollect ever having met with a single individual who did not smoke, and, generally speaking, in fact almost unanimously they made use of a short pipe, either of clay or meerschaum, but in tobacco varying according to taste. But, generally speaking, on their way to the East they made use of that which is termed Cavendish, or of a more common species, whereas

almost the whole of the French officers, as the soldiers, who did smoke — and there were very many also who did not—as well as the officers of the ship, for the most part made use of the cigar or the cigarette.

But in reference to those little details which I received from my travelling companion, Monsieur Grouet, I may remark,—for it is well that I continue the subject of smoke to the end of the chapter,—that although various opinions and ideas are prevalent as to the nature of the article meerschaum, as in like manner with regard to amber —the one used for making the pipe itself, the other the mouthpiece—they are for the most part erroneous.

Meerschaum I have heard many assert to be nothing more or less than a composition, soft when prepared, shaped, and moulded, but becoming hard and durable when exposed to the air; while others, speaking of meerschaum, or *écume de mer*, believe it to be nothing more or less than a petrifaction of the cream or froth

which is left by the receding tide on the shores of the Caspian Sea. There are other similar fancies, all, however, incorrect, inasmuch as it is a production from the East, found at no great depth from the surface, and principally in the neighbourhood of Broussa, under the shadows of Mount Olympus. But what is strange with regard to this mineral production, if such it can be termed, formed and found only in a country above all others where smoking is most prevalent, not a pound weight of it is sold there, every ounce being packed in boxes, and sent direct to Trieste, whence for the most part it finds its way to Vienna, there to be converted into the handsome pipes which adorn the windows of the tobacco-shops in London, as in every other city of Europe. Return it does, even to Broussa, Smyrna, and abundantly to Constantinople, where very handsome meerschaums may be purchased, but by the inhabitants of the East they are rarely made use of. There are, doubtless, many compositions sold as being

meerschaums; the real article is, however, readily discovered by a smoker. If from no outward sign, from the fact that it softens and absorbs the oil of the tobacco when smoked, whereas the composition does not. When found, which at times it is in large quantities, it is packed in boxes, numbered in four qualities, and sent to Smyrna for embarkation. It is very difficult to obtain a single specimen even at Broussa, a box of the number selected being alone ceded to the purchaser. If the meerschaum of which the pipes are made comes from the East, and is principally used in the North, it is precisely the reverse as regards the amber, which is almost entirely the produce of the Baltic Sea, on the shores of which it is discovered in great abundance. Some, nevertheless, imagine it to be composed of gum from Arabia, and others a mere composition from the white of eggs. With regard to amber, as of meerschaum, there are many spurious imitations, perhaps the best imitation being made of Bohemian glass, which, how-

ever, is brittle, hot, and unpleasant to the mouth of the smoker, as is the real amber cool and agreeable.

It is a singular fact that, notwithstanding the habit of smoking is now universal in the East, that in other days, and during the reign of many Sultans, it was most rigorously interdicted. More than one Turk has forfeited his life from the impossibility of foregoing the luxury; and many a head has rolled from the shoulders of its owner, caught in the act of enjoying a soothing chibouque.

The even hourly habit of coffee-drinking has not in other days proved less fatal; it has alike caused martyrs and fanatics. But again, "*tout cela est changé;*" and pipes and coffee are alike the medium of all intercourse, as the one thing absolutely necessary in the daily routine of Eastern associations.

The tobacco-merchants at Constantinople are for the most part Greeks and Armenians. The former are principally natives of Janina, Larissa,

and Salonica. The latter come from Samsoun, Trebisonde, and Erzeroum. Generally speaking, they are most intelligent persons; indeed it is by no means singular, more particularly during the fast of the Ramadan, to find an assembly of Pashas and Eastern aristocrats sitting on shop-boards or bales of tobacco, smoking and drinking coffee, and listening to the current events of the day as detailed by these agreeable purveyors of the narcotic weed. In fact, a sort of pleasant *réunion* not seldom takes place in their bazaars, similar to those at Alvarey of other days under the Opera Colonnade. The ponderous cigar-box, which there formed the seat of our English Pashas, being exchanged for a bale of tobacco, the cigar into the chibouque or narguillet.

Smoking, as all the world knows, is to the Turk an absolute necessary of existence, as in all appearance it seems likely to become so to the Englishman; consequently the tobacco-shops, as those for amber mouth-pieces and pipe-sticks, are necessarily abundant in all Eastern towns.

A slight sketch of European and Eastern dealing, in reference to these matters of luxury, may, therefore, possibly create some little amusement. I will give it from the life, without the slightest exaggeration, my actors in the scene being Sayah himself, a young officer recovering from a slight wound received at Alma, and their interpreter, one of the many Demetris and Paulos who infest the hotels of Pera, and are, — and I say it fearless of their anger, — without exception the most unmitigated rogues in existence. These individuals have risen like mushrooms from the earth since the advent of the war, or, not being able to make an honest living elsewhere, have gathered together from north, south, east, and west, with a determination and coolness which passes all belief, to rob all the world, if so be they can enrich themselves. They profess to speak every language under the sun. It may be so, yet it is impossible to understand any one of them, however you may previously have fancied that you were to-

lerably proficient in the modern languages. It must also be strictly borne in mind that these speculators in men's weaknesses, although declaring themselves to be either Greeks or Italians, are, for the most part, subjects of the Ionian Isles, or a mixed breed of Greek, Italian, Jew, and Gentile, forming a race set apart, as it were, from all other races, to rob their neighbour, as if it were a virtue. The price they demand for walking with you through the bazaars, and when there having introduced you to those shops, from the owners of which they receive the largest amount of "bakshish," or percentage, is on or about as much as would supply an honest, hard-working English agricultural labourer, and his family of six children, for the best part of a week; and even with this they seldom appear satisfied.

But I will suppose my friend and his companion under the protection of one of these cormorants to have entered the shop of a tobacco-merchant in the bazaar, both requiring some

handsome cherry or jessamine tubes, together with their amber mouth-pieces.

The Armenian shopkeeper or merchant (they are all merchants, as in Scotland), lord of the surrounding treasures, courteously receives them, and immediately offers seats, pipes, and coffee, and the bargaining begins; not, however, without the assistance of the interpreter, who is utterly regardless, and totally indifferent to any principle under the blue sky of Stamboul, save that of self.

The seats being accepted, as well as the pipes and coffee, Sayah fixes his eye on a straight, well-polished, handsome jessamine stick, and having been requested to purchase one for a friend, he directs Demetri to ask the price, on which about the following scene passes:—

Demetri.—"This Englishman, who, I believe, is a pasha in his own country, and, like the whole race, is so rich that he does not know what to do with his money, has selected this

tube. He can afford to pay for it; but you must recollect that twenty per cent is the very least I expect for having brought him to your shop. It is possible they may expend a good round sum,—make them pay, but do not overdo it at first."

Armenian Merchant.—"Excellent friend, I am fully alive to your merits, and at once admit the justice of your demands. Tell the illustrious stranger that I am sensible of the honour he confers on me, by selecting my humble collection of goods in preference to those of other merchants. But I see he is a man of no common order. His genius is great; his discrimination is perfect. I could not have done better myself. He has selected the very best tube in my shop. That stick, you will observe, is of a highly delicate contour, is full three yards in length, and of perfect straightness. It was intended and reserved for the Sultan's own smoking. But the Light of the World must go on this occasion without it. The English pasha has honoured my

poor shop by his presence. It is his. Allah preserve him years to smoke it! For five hundred piastres!"

Demetri.—"He says the price is five hundred and fifty piastres. He has already refused five hundred. It was intended for the Sultan or the Grand Vizier; but he likes Englishmen, and will rather sell it to you. It is not very dear."

Young Officer (*hastily*).—"Not dear! Tell the vile rascal that Jones of ours bought a far better one for half the money. I say, Sayah, offer him half the money." True to this advice, Sayah, who admires the stick, and justly so (for it is really a handsome one), directs the interpreter to offer two hundred piastres.

Demetri shakes his head, but nevertheless obeys his orders.

Armenian (*smiling*).—"I am honoured. Well, it is strange. Nevertheless, these Englishmen become more enlightened every day, the dogs! Two hundred piastres! I shall only gain forty by the bargain, and your percentage. Say three

hundred. I will take two hundred and fifty ere we part."

In the meantime, the hero of Alma also selects a tube, but being of a nature somewhat more irritable than his companion, dashes at once into business. Moreover, he has already had some insight into the commercial transactions of the bazaar, and is well aware that the slightest delicacy or faith, as regards the interpreter, is out of the question, however habit might excuse it in reference to the merchant.

He, therefore, selects a tube and a mouth-piece which appear best to please him, and then, turning to Demetri, says in good plain English, "Here, you d—d thief! tell the old gentleman I will give him—let me see—three hundred piastres for this stick and mouthpiece; and if he does not like to take it, he may lump it; I shall go elsewhere and purchase a better for less money." Of course, both purchasers obtained what they required, as the merchants do. But I will not fatigue my friends by any further details

of that which is an every-day occurrence in the bazaars at Constantinople, alike as regards the tobacco and pipe merchant, as it is for the most part in reference to all others, whether it be the seller of embroidered slippers, or of Broussa silks, shawls, or jewellery, save that the pipe and coffee, more particularly in these days, when European money flies like hailstones, does not, on all occasions, form the necessary portion of a bargain.

The Turkish tobacco, which is of a light brown colour, and of a most agreeable smell, is divided into four sorts. The best, which is called "iarach," or sweet; "orta," or moderate, of second quality; "dokan akda," or sharp, third; and "sert," strong, fourth. Previous to the war, which has greatly increased everything in price, the very best might be obtained for about eighteen or twenty piastres the oeque, about two and a half pounds English, the piastre being calculated at twopence English; but now it can be scarcely had for a third more. The above to-

baccos, which vary alike in flavour as in strength, are generally smoked in chibouques (long Turkish pipes), or rolled into cigarettes. In the shorter pipe, or meerschaum pipe, they are hot and unpleasant to the mouth till they are mixed with Latakia or Canaster, and then they are most agreeable. The best of all is the produce of Macedonia.

The "tombiki," another species of tobacco used in the East, though brought from Persia, is exclusively smoked in the narguillet, or water-pipe. It is of a darker brown, and of such strength as to be unpalatable, till it has been steeped some hours in water. This tobacco is indispensable to narguillet smokers, — a luxury that hitherto I have been unable to accomplish. By those, however, who are expert in the mode of drawing up the aromatic smoke through long tubes, which, having passed through water or rosewater, comes cool to the lips, I am told the habit is surpassingly seductive, producing poetic reveries, and procuring for the time an excitement of the mental powers, which enables him to build

charming castles in the air, which, after all, end in smoke. In fact, the narguillet is pronounced to be the very perfection of smoking—the smoke of smokes. I can find no other words to describe a pleasure physical as well as mental, which appears to have enslaved sultans and sultanas, pashas of high degree, English peers, artists, and authors,—a pleasure still denied to Sayah, whose lungs have hitherto prevented his becoming a proficient in an art, which, like many other arts, when once acquired, is very simple and devoid of many of its fancied evils. The narguillet is, nevertheless, an indulgence which can only be enjoyed to the full in the calm retirement of a room, or beneath the shade of some luxuriant tree during summer's mildness. I was about to say, under the influences of an Eastern sky and Eastern climate. But I must confess, that to me the long twilight of an English summer's night is so far preferable to the dense heat which succeeds a blazing day in the East, that I should be false did I assert it. Moreover, the narguillet requires

the constant attention of one practically acquainted with the mode of arranging and cleansing it. And the cost of the pipe itself—that is a good one—is a serious consideration. Many are enriched with solid gold or silver, a few with cut steel, and many are inlaid, in the most beautiful manner and perfect taste, with precious stones of every species which caprice and beauty can supply. In fact, the narguillet of the first order is unquestionably a regal pipe, from which the rich perfume of the most choice and perfumed tobacco is inhaled, through the soothing and exciting influences of which sultans and their favourites dream away life.

In the modern Byzantium, everything connected with the pipe is conducted with an extreme care and luxury. The shops containing the long cherry and jessamine sticks in common use, as well as the amber mouth-pieces, are innumerable, and well stocked.

The sticks most pleasing to the eye are those from the cherry-tree. The jessamine stick is,

however, considered superior by connoisseurs, and is therefore sold at a higher price: the superiority consisting in the fact of the tobacco-smoke which passes through them, possibly from the wood being harder, coming cooler to the mouth. The value of these sticks, whether of cherry-wood or jessamine, for the most part consists in their greater thickness and straightness. A fine and perfect cherry-tube, with a well-selected amber mouth-piece, of a pure, light, unclouded lemon-colour, is considered to be the most valuable by the Turks, and will cost not seldom a hundred pounds; a jessamine stick, with an equally good amber mouth-piece, frequently more.

The speculation and sale of amber and amber mouth-pieces—for amber is converted into beads, bracelets, and various articles of female adornment, much valued by the Turks,—is in a manner unconnected with the sellers of the tubes, save that they all retail them for the benefit of their customers.

A good mouth-piece, not too light or too dark, retaining a pure citron colour, encircled with precious stones, which those of any value generally are, will command almost a fabulous price; and to those who cannot clearly conceive the intense love, admiration, and delight, or the intense gratification with which a Turk finds himself in the possession of a first-rate pipe, an article which creates jealousies and intrigues only equal to those caused by a faithless woman.

It is by no means a rare thing for the rich to possess a case of pipes with all their appurtenances, sticks and amber mouth-pieces, of the value of a thousand pounds, and more particularly in the houses of aristocrats or Pashas, the mouth of the owner not seldom presses half the day long a piece of amber so enriched and encircled with precious stones, diamonds, and rubies, that the side-boards of few but our wealthy in England could display a similar value in silver. In fact, the Turk has a delight in displaying his wealth in pipes and their appur-

tenances. I was about to say, in a more sensitively vulgar manner (though I am corrected by one who says a Turk cannot commit a vulgar act) than that which is displayed by the aristocracy of riches. It is, nevertheless, a harmless taste, an unobtrusive eccentricity which injures none, and is the favourite pleasure and vanity of the Turk. A taste not entirely singular in the land we live, for great was the sum expended by a royal Duke in the article pipe; many of a high price being sold on his decease: one of which, valued at one hundred guineas, may, to this day, be seen in the shop of a well-known tobacconist at the West End. Alas! if the Hero of a Hundred Fights were now in the land of the living, it would be difficult to form an opinion of what might be his orders to the British army touching the now almost unanimous use of tobacco, as the no less unanimous fashion of beards and moustaches.

"Heureux Turc! il fumait de l' 'orta' dans de l'ambre."

Happy Englishman! The misery of a dull

razor need no longer be deplored. So much for pipes and tobacco. I trust the peculiarity of my subject will not have induced me to fatigue by details too lengthy; at all events, it may tend to amuse, if not to instruct, the legion of English smokers, who now increase the revenue and injure their digestions. One thing is certain, he who leaves the city of the Queen for Constantinople, and fancies himself free from the smoke of coal, will, on his arrival at the city of the Sultan, if it be not during the Ramasan, find himself in a cloud of tobacco smoke. So much for habit — so much for taste. But yesterday, that which was considered dirty, nauseous, disgusting, to-day has become a taste, a pastime, considered all but a necessity, alike by the most intellectual as the best-bred. In conclusion, I may name, that during the year 1854 it was estimated that the sum expended in the United Kingdom for cigars and tobacco exceeded eight millions sterling, which enormous sum is above the gross amount levied for the

poor-rate of the entire nation. And it is calculated that the yearly consumption of tobacco in Turkey reaches 300,000,000 lbs., allowing 40 lbs. a-year each for 8,000,000 smokers.

The foregoing chapter is a mere statement of facts, written without the slightest intention of advocating a habit which, although in proper time and place is pleasant, is nevertheless unquestionably a bad one.

CHAPTER XIII.

SYRA is the last of the islands of the Archipelago at which the vessel touches on its voyage from Smyrna to Malta. Various and contradictory are the opinions in reference to its natural beauties. It requires but few remarks. Apparently a barren rock, it, nevertheless, produces a revenue equal to that enjoyed by very many untitled gentlemen who live at home at ease, shoot their own partridges, and ride their own hunters,—say about twelve thousand per annum,—for the most part derived from its produce of vegetables and fruit, the greater portion being figs.

But yesterday, its little capital, the only town in the island, like the generality of Grecian towns,

was perched half-way up the slope of the rocky hill-side, which faces a tolerable harbour. The great increase of trade, however, as the regular arrival and departure of the steamers of the Messageric Impériale, together with steamers from Liverpool and Trieste, the latter of which, for the most part, touch at Athens; and also a tolerably regular postal communication with Athens and elsewhere, has caused this heretofore very insignificant little town to throw out its arms and grasp the shore, to the borders of which its consecutive houses now reach. Buildings are daily rising to view on that which but yesterday was a barren rock. In fact, Syra has become the Liverpool of Greece, and bids fair to rival the Modern Athens. Moreover, its central position causes it to be not only the dépôt of receipt as regards all the means of existence from the several islands by which it is surrounded, but also the dépôt of receipt of all things necessary to supply those islands, as the capital itself. Not a road, however, has hitherto been made on

its rocky surface, though one is now actually marked out, if not commenced, which intersects the island, and which will communicate with an excellent little harbour on the northern shore, whose merits have long been known, though allowed to remain useless as regards any communication or advantage with the town of Syra or the island, from want of that which stern necessity, or the love of gain, has at length effected. Better late than never, painful though it is to witness the fearful want of energy and demoralisation, if not of integrity, in a nation remembered as "Greece."

There is not one Greek in ten whose heart is not with the Russian cause; and although the advantages daily accruing to Syra and all the islands of the Archipelago by constant and rapid intercourse with France and England, it is more than evident, there is no obstacle that is not thrown in the way to cause them annoyance. The mere whisper of disease at Constantinople is sufficient, and more than sufficient, to place a

French or English vessel in quarantine. Despatches, postal, commercial, and all other communications, being thus necessarily, and at times most seriously inconvenienced. There they only follow up the odious example of the Neapolitan Government in all matters of detention, quarantine, and tomfoolery; but with English and French troops at Athens, and a nation professing to work with us, it is sufficiently clear to the dullest, the Greeks work against us in all things save the reception of our money.

Six times during the last eight months have I visited Syra; four has the vessel on which I was on board been in quarantine: as far as I or any of the authorities could learn, from no grounds, save that a few cases of cholera had been "reported" at Constantinople. On the other occasions I did land—but Syra boasts not of trees or shade; I doubt if there is a score on the island. It is necessary, therefore, to walk on the shady side of the streets to escape a *coup de soleil*, or being grilled; yet no market

that I have seen in the East is so well supplied with fish, vegetables, flowers, and fruit—the latter three being imported from the neighbouring Isle of Tenos. Altogether Syra is fiercely hot, and utterly without interest to those who seek at least for the much-vaunted, but greatly exaggerated beauties of the Isles of the Archipelago.

From Syra to Malta by steam, weather being fair, is a course of fifty hours. If foul, there are few seas more wanting in courtesy than that of the dark blue Mediterranean; and not seldom have I felt rejoiced when, awakening from a feverish night's tossing in my berth, to find myself snug in the beautiful harbour of that strange, but truly interesting island.

Years have flown by—alas! too many—since I was in garrison there with one of the most distinguished regiments in the service. Time, I fancy, causes strange effects for good and evil, as regards most of us, whether in relation to people or places; and I must own, the impres-

sions left on my mind, on each occasion that I have recently visited it, have invariably induced my mouth to speak, as my heart to feel, that Malta of this, the year 1855, is no longer the gay and joyous Malta of other days. So I shall venture to write in reference to that which it was, at least as a military quarter, ere I say a few words of what it really is.

The silence of history, in respect to Malta, until the first commercial people of the universe took advantage of its situation, is remarkable. And yet its position in the centre of the Mediterranean, as its port is so perfect, that Art, having little power to embellish it, has employed, during a course of two hundred years, all her efforts to ensure its defence, in order to secure its possession as a key to the East, as well as to retain its advantages of commerce. It has now become a sort of second Madeira, where queens and subjects have gathered together to recover health, and being, as it were, the high road, or rather halting-place on the high road to the East, the

wanderer in search of pleasure, duty, or information, rests there on his outward route; and I must admit it was, and still is, a very pleasant abiding-place for those who desire to make a brief sojourn therein.

One of the most remarkable epochs in the history of the island, which of itself would form a valuable addition to our literature, is that of the conversion of the inhabitants to Christianity by St. Paul, about the year 56, when shipwrecked on the rock which forms the entrance of what, in the present day, is called the Port of St. Paul. Thus were accomplished the designs of Divine Providence for the propagation of the faith. All concurred to advance them, even the disorder of the elements; and the charity of the islanders was recompensed by the knowledge of the truths of the religion which the Apostle preached to them, as well as the sight of the miracles he performed in the name of our Saviour. Indeed, the inhabitants of Casal Nasciar boast of being the first Maltese who were baptized, and derive

the word Nasciar from *Nasara*, which signifies Christian.

Possibly the most striking object, however, to him who first visits Malta is its noble harbours and impregnable batteries. To look on them in the days we live, bristling with cannons, it is difficult to recollect that in those past, when held by the Spaniards, the artillery of the fortress consisted only of two small guns and some iron mortars. In the present day the whole aspect of Malta bears a stamp peculiar and interesting, though progress and civilisation there, as elsewhere, has gone far to change most things for the benefit of the multitude. The palaces of the Knights Hospitallers, save in their original outward aspect, are converted into ordinary abodes of English gentlemen. That of the Grand Master, built by Eustace d'Ernest, a handsome edifice facing the Grand Place or Square of the city, being appropriated to the use of the Governor for the time being. On this square, in days "lang syne," bands were wont to play during the cool of the evening;

and ladies fair, peeping with flashing eyes from beneath the quaint, yet elegant *faldelta*, gathered in numbers to listen to their cheering sounds, and lounge away an hour with military admirers of high and low degree.

This square also was, no doubt, the arena where in knightly days lances were broken in the tournament. Many and many a night have I danced till daylight did appear in that all but regal palace, and ate quail-pie for supper,—no bad gastronomic invention, greatly improved by the addition of iced champagne; and this in a room hung around with tapestry, worthy the chivalrous spirits who formerly set the good example; while the portraits of these gallant soldiers of the Cross—many of which are hung round the capacious saloons—seem ready to start from their frames, to reprove the little innocent gallantries which were passing under their notice. All the other hotels and palaces, heretofore the hotels of the Knights, are now the quarters of British officers, most agreeable and truly hospitable

English gentlemen, worthy to inhabit such time-honoured residences. Yet were the Knights of old to rise from the dead, it strikes me they would be somewhat startled out of their propriety by the strange metamorphose which Time, who is no respecter of persons or places, has effected as regards the interior, as the occupancy of their ancient abodes.

La Valletta, or Valetta, is now the capital of this military conservatory, though Civita Vecchia, or Notta Porte, built on the highest ground near the centre of the island, formerly claimed that honour. It is, to say the least of it, still a pleasant and most peculiar abiding-place, most difficult to describe. Indeed, were I to endeavour to give a truthful sketch of it, I should say, take France, Italy, Africa, Syria, Turkey, and England, mix them well together, and serve the compound, baked in a hot sun, and diluted with iced champagne—in fact at Malta there is a little of everything. The majority of residents being English, the society must naturally vary from the

constant arrival and departure of regiments and visitors, who pitch like sea-gulls on the rock for a brief season, and then fly off to other lands in search of other interests and pleasures.

Formerly nothing could be more agreeable than the constant interchange of friendly intercourse. Regiments selected from the *élite* of the English army, infantry and artillery, were stationed there for years; together with the fleet, constantly touching there, and generally remaining throughout the winter. Consequently, the officers' wives and families assembled there also; and thus day by day some pleasant *réunion* took place, not seldom ending in the merry peal of the marriage-bells. But as in the case of tobacco-smoke, so as regards Malta, "*tout cela est changé.*" War and its evil effects have already left the stamp of its sadness on that once cheery little island. Heretofore, where everything was cheap and abundant, all is now dear and scarce, and a heavy cloud seems to lower over the city. When I last visited it, the

sky appeared to me as no longer blue, the sea no longer calm, or rippled by the delightful summer breezes which were ever wont to refresh the rock during the most intense heat. The houses looked smaller, the faces of those one met in the streets looked sad—the flowers, the boast of Malta, had no smell. Alas! "the light of other days had faded." The garrison consists of dépôts from every regiment in the service, and these are daily changing, alike as regards officers and men; the fleet is in the Black Sea or that of Azoff. Ships of war, steamers, and transports, halt there for an hour, and pass onwards to the East, having bought up all the delicacies they can lay hands on, with gallant spirits hastening to the seat of war, in anticipation of honours and victories to be shared in; while others return home, with sick and wounded sufferers. Daily, nay hourly, is the picture changed. Mails and despatches arrive—mails and despatches depart to and from home, and from the East; and the one, only, all-absorb-

ing question of the moment is—news, news. It may, therefore, be well supposed that gaiety is at a stand-still; and although many doubtless make fortunes from increased prices, or much overcharging, others find it hard to live.

But that which struck me as being the most painful of all as regards Malta at the present hour, is the fact of its being a selected spot, where fond mothers, and fonder wives and children, have in numbers taken up their abode to be nearer those they love, who are fighting and enduring for their country. There, consequently, must they live in a constant state of anxiety between hope and fear; each mail, each ship which enters the harbour from the seat of war, is to them the harbinger of joy or sorrow. Such are the effects of war: such the events of life.

Yet when peace reigned over the land, no place more agreeable, I fancy, for gentlemen of Her Majesty's army, whom duty called to a foreign station: to them it was fortunate that England

claimed a *locale* wherein their turn of foreign service could be so agreeably performed. In those days, when the Malta races were announced, had there been such easy access by steam as now there is, I doubt if half the sporting men of England would not have gathered there to witness the sport: though, if truth be told, the race-course was a mere rocky road, picked up into dust or mud, and tanned to prevent accidents; protected on the one side by houses, and on the other bordered by the harbour, sufficiently deep at most times to drown any luckless rider who may have chanced to be mounted on a bolter,—by no means a rare occurrence, considering that for the most part the horses entered for these all-absorbing races were not seldom all but unbroken Arabs. The posts, moreover, particularly those at the very turn where the skill of the jockeys was most required to be displayed, were iron guns, deemed as unfit for service, and therefore thus turned into use to protect the corners of the houses from being ill-used by the wheels of the

constantly-passing calecches and other lumbering vehicles — the Pieta, or Malta, race-course being also the Rotten Row of the city, where ladies fair and cavaliers were wont to ride and show themselves to the public.

These races took place during the spring and autumn, each meeting lasting at least four days, during which all Malta became sporting mad. Youths fresh from Eton, Harrow, or Sandhurst, who had recently joined their regiments from England, rushed about on ponies and horses of every breed and size, accoutred in Newmarket coats with racing-whips in their hands, betting dollars with the assumption of members at Tattersall's. Maltese gentlemen aped the sporting knowledge of their English friends, and not seldom lost their money; while young ladies and old, of all nations, speaking all tongues, betted gloves on the Malta Derby and the Floriana stakes — selected the colours of their favourite riders, and looked forward to balls and champagne suppers, waltzing and flirtations; while

the gentlemen, for weeks previous to each meeting, met at the jockey-club — for a jockey-club there was — or at "Joe Macallif's," then the *café par excellence* of Malta, and took the odds on Smitch or the Grand Master.

Malta also could boast of an admirable racket-court, now closed, where matches were played with the thermometer at 90°, and iced lemonade quaffed in quarts, without the slightest ill effects, lemons being abundant and ice in equal proportions. Indeed, it forms one of the greatest luxuries of the island, and is always to be had, inasmuch as a contractor is under heavy penalties to supply it in abundance from Mount Etna, in order to preserve the fresh meat served out as rations for the troops during the hot season. In fact, iced water, iced ale, iced butter—everything iced was to be had at Malta, save the hearts of the society. It could also boast of a pretty opera, generally supported by a very tolerable company from Italy, where, after mess, Her Majesty's officers were wont to resort in numbers,

each regiment having its private box for a very inconsiderable outlay.

The gardens of the Governor of St. Antonia were also a great source of enjoyment, open to the public and abounding with fruit, flowers, orange and lemon-groves. The gardener being out of sight, grapes were also to be plucked *ad libitum*, and of the finest and sweetest. And soft words of love, which fell pleasing on ears ready to listen, were not seldom wafted through the fragrant air of the orange-blossom. Such was Malta long, long ago — far other days are they now!

The ancient abodes of the Knights were termed palaces, having the several names of Provence, Auvergne, Castile, &c., and to each Knight of the Order, in accordance with his native tongue, a particular post of defence was appointed in case of attack.

Floriana,—so named from the beautiful fortifications by which it is surrounded, was built after a plan of Colonel Floriani, who was sent

there for that purpose by the Pope in 1635,—is another military station without the gates of the city, where English troops were quartered. It is now occupied by a regiment of Militia, and many a merry laugh and jovial song has sounded through those halls once occupied by the Knights.

I must, ere I close the subject of this rocky southern possession of Old England, say a word in reference to the carriages, or calèches, peculiarly adapted, and generally used, in the island; though four-wheelers and broughams have found their way there in these days of easy steam-conveyance from Marseilles as from Old England. The Malta calèche, so called, is a vehicle peculiar to the island. I am not aware that I ever beheld any similar carriage in any other country; and, generally speaking, they are used alike for public as private conveyance. I can compare them to nothing else than good-sized sedan-chairs on wheels, with windows in front as at the sides, having no seat for the driver, who,

without shoes on his feet, a red sash round his waist, and a Maltese cap on his head, runs by the side of the horse for miles, keeping pace with a fast-trotter, and this with inconceivable wind and stamina. These carriages are used on all occasions, as are cabs in London and elsewhere, for a drive into the country, as for dinners and balls; while some few of the superior officers of the garrison, the Governor, and some of the more wealthy inhabitants, keep their own, in which they are bumped about the ill-paved town. I do not at the moment recollect whether they have the advantage of springs, but I fancy not, as the nature of Sayah, being of a lean kind, he certainly bears in mind having been considerably jolted and bruised during sundry drives in the country, as well as nightly gaddings which he made, in order to partake of the festivities which in other days were so kindly offered to those whom chance led to the island. At all events, every motion of the horse is felt, inasmuch as the heavy shafts, suitable to the

heavy sedan on wheels, are placed high on the animal's back. In fact, the bodily inclination of him who rides within has a tendency first backwards, then forwards, not dissimilar to the rolling of a ship. But they are, nevertheless, a very useful means of conveyance in hot weather or wet, and are in all respects fitted to the wants of the island which claims them.

Sunday having arrived during my last visit to Malta in the month of June, I attended divine service at the church built under the generous and Christian auspices of the late Queen Dowager. It is, indeed, a handsome and commodious building; and the English residents of Malta, as the Christian world, cannot be too thankful that one in rank so illustrious, in spirit so fervent and humble, should have judged fit, by the weight of her position, as by the aid of her means, to grant so great a blessing to the Protestant people of an island somewhat enslaved by bigotry and intolerance; but, far more than all, that she should have set so bright an example

to those disposed to neglect the offices of religion, as to have erected from her private resources a temple, in proof of her faith in a Redeemer, on a foreign shore where none hitherto existed, and to which all may go in penitence and ask for grace.

Truly the little island of Malta is a gem set in the wide waters of the Mediterranean, the possession of which all Englishmen must be proud of; doubly so, when reading the words inscribed over the Main Guard, which faces the palace of the Governor:—"Magnæ et invictæ Britanniæ Miletensum amor et Europæ vox has Insulas confirmat. A.D. 1411."

CHAPTER XIV.

It is generally imagined by those who have never crossed the very unpleasant Channel which divides our favoured little island from our foreign neighbours, that southern seas, and more particularly that of the Mediterranean, is one of constant calm and sunshine. Unpractical poetic minds, and those who live at home at ease, read Byron and the works of Eastern travellers, are not seldom wont to speak of dark blue skies, and the calm, dark blue, sparkling seas of the Mediterranean. Indeed, many who have actually crossed that sea again and again in midsummer-time, and who have, perchance, been favoured for two or three days by fair and enjoyable weather, are very apt to forget the disagreeables, allowing the

mind alone to dwell on that which occurred precisely as they would have desired. At the very moment that my pen writes these words I am sitting in a capacious saloon of a steamer, within six hours of Messina. The sea is as calm as a mill-pond,—I believe that to be a proper simile,—and the sky above, without one single cloud, presents a perfect heaven of blue, yet not so blue as the sea below; though some will have it that the briny waters receive their cobalt face from the heavens' reflection. If so, when clouds of murky-brown colour hang o'er the sky, why is it as ever blue? The sun shines bright, throwing its glittering rays far and wide over the still waters, while a light air, just of sufficient force to prevent the heat from being absolutely oppressive, completes the charms of a summer's day: with which, I should imagine, the most grumbling farmer in Lincolnshire could not find fault. For all that, and grateful as we ought to be that the Almighty should so favour man, I declare that, as regards the Mediterranean Sea, its

periods of calm are the exceptions rather than the prevailing rule; or is fine weather that on which to count. During eight months of the year I know of no more disagreeable, tempestuous, and uncertain sea; and the many times that I have crossed it from Marseilles to Constantinople, I have not seldom encountered weather that might be fairly termed terrific. I am not about to bore my readers with any details of the miseries of ship-board,—and above all, those of a French steamer under such circumstances. But on one occasion, that I was doomed to a week's disgust, danger, and delay, between Malta and Marseilles, consequent on most tempestuous weather, necessity, as well as the safety of the vessel, was the cause of my visiting several places which otherwise I might never have seen in my life. On leaving Malta, on the 7th March, 1855, the weather was tolerably fair; scarcely had we reached the coast of Sicily, however, ere the whistling wind and rising sea forewarned us of a coming gale. When in sight of the little town of Marsalla, celebrated

for the wine of that name, it blew half a gale; and ere we gained Sardinia, under the protection of whose high and rocky cliffs we crept, the half gale became the gale. Never shall I cease to recollect the discomfort and misery, if not absolute danger, of that tempestuous night, as along the iron-bound coast of Sardinia we struggled in a steamer whose boilers were not of sufficient magnitude to supply the engines with that amount of steam necessary to propel the vessel against so fearful a sea. In fact, her horse-power was greater than her steam-power; and thus, with at least two hundred sick and wounded soldiers from the seat of war, in a weak and ill-manned vessel, we laboured against the increasing gale, which roared over the Sardinian mountains, and whistled through the shrouds, till I confess having fancied, as many others did who had recently faced danger in the battle-field, that the funnel would go overboard, and we were about to be wrecked on the dark and wild-looking shores near which we were hugging for protection. It is

true, this was in the month of March; but it was equally true that it was on the so-termed "calm, blue Mediterranean." At length a merciful Providence came to our aid. The captain or crew of the vessel had very little to do with it, and we succeeded in gaining a small sheltered bay called Figura, on the eastern coast of Sardinia, and dropped our anchor in safety.

The relief from the tossing, to say nothing of the danger we had escaped, can only be properly estimated by one who has endured it.

The following morning broke with a tolerably clear sky, as we looked forth on the comparatively placid basin, surrounded on all sides by wild, rocky hills, in which we had passed the greater portion of the night. The wind, however, still howled without, and the sea still foamed,—but our commander, who, I was informed, was an excellent individual, and a poet,—I do not presume to give any opinion as to his professional merits—knew, apparently, that a safer harbour was at hand. Once more, therefore, we got up

steam and away, after a few hours' rolling to find ourselves at anchor again before the little town of La Madelina—the capital, and the only habited place in the wild and rocky island of that name. It was there that, during the War of Independence, the illustrious Nelson anchored his gallant fleet in order to watch the French, then fitting out at Toulon,—and so far it had its interest. Moreover, the cluster of rocky islands around us, of peculiar form and outline, were by no means without charms to one who had heretofore never chanced to find himself in such close contact with the larger island of Sardinia, and still more interesting island of Corsica; therefore, though storm-stayed, as it were, for a time, and delayed in those pressing duties whose value and importance are so greatly enhanced by speed, I was determined to see all that offered itself worthy of inspection; and finding we had no alternative but that of waiting a change of wind and weather, we landed at La Madelina, and walked over the island. Never did I find myself in apparently

a more barren spot, as far as all the requirements of life are concerned. A dozen trees — for the most part fig-trees — constitute the shade of the island; a few goats here and there wandered over its rough surface: but not a vestige of that which might be fairly termed herbage, or a sheep, or a cow, presented itself. Cocks and hens, however, appeared in numbers, and fresh eggs (which I conclude to be the principal food of the islanders), with which we supplied ourselves, were in abundance. Having visited an old castle, or fort, perched on the summit of the highest hill of the island, in which a few guns lay dismounted, as was the fort itself in ruins, though protected by two half-starved and miserable-looking soldiers, I descended to the little town to inquire as to the persons in authority, and was then introduced to a French consular agent, who gave me the first information I had received of the death of the Czar of all the Russias. "Has any other ship been driven here for shelter," I observed, "that you speak so positively of the fact of his demise?"

"No," he replied; "but we have a telegraph here, which passes through Corsica and the islands direct to Cagliari." I own I was not previously aware of such a fact; moreover, astonished to find that such was the case. It is only another proof of the activity of our Allies, to take advantage—as do they ever—of all scientific measures tending to the advantage as the advance of civilisation; a fact, also, which induces me to regret that Sardinia, an island, the interior of which is replete with the finest vegetation—an island which produces in abundance every article of the finest and cheapest for man's consumption—should not, more particularly at this moment of war time, be taken advantage of. Surely the laying down a line of telegraph to Malta from Cagliari* would be most desirable, and secured at an expense which would be trifling in comparison to the advantages gained. Malta, now almost dependent on Sicily for commissariat sup-

* Since the above was written, I understand it is contemplated.

plies, and the army in the East from wheresoever they can get them, would find, or I am greatly in error, a most cheap and abundant market in Sardinia. From its situation in the Mediterranean, as from its many fine harbours, it is an island which would become invaluable to an energetic and active people, for there God has done everything — man, as yet, how little! The want of roads has hitherto prevented many travellers from thoroughly visiting it; moreover, the accommodation in the interior is a home among half-civilised people. The country, however, is beautiful in many parts, and the land not to be surpassed in fertility. Lord Nelson was ever anxious that England should possess it; and the day may— nay, will, it is to be hoped — arrive, when Sardinia, as Sicily, will really be in proper hands, and what Nature has intended them to be—the gardens of the Mediterranean, and the two most productive and civilised islands in Europe. For two long and boisterous days we lay storm-stayed in sight of La Madelina, and the barren rocky

shores on all sides surrounding us; still the mistrail* howled, though the sky above was clear and blue, and the sun shone brightly. At length, on the second evening, the anchor was once more hove; it was only, however, to proceed a mile or two among the islands ere it was again let go, the howling winds and the threatening nature of the sky warning the captain that the Gulph of Lyons was in a rude temper; and thus, if compelled to another night's delay, we enjoyed, at least, a night of repose. The third morning broke fair and bright, with a clear blue sky overhead, which gave some hope of a change; the wind, however, still blew fiercely, — in a measure foretold the miseries we were about to endure. Never shall I forget them. However, with hopeful and cheerful anticipations that the worst was over, we were again launched forth to the mercies of the wide ocean. Scarcely had we issued from the clustering islands and passed within sight of the little town of Bonafaccio ere the wind in-

* North-west wind.

creased to a gale; the sea boiled and foamed, and the vessel rolled and creaked in a manner it is beyond my pen to describe. Unfortunately, some sick and wounded gallant Guardsmen, who were my companions direct from the seat of war, and naturally most anxious to reach their homes, had been, as I had been, somewhat impatient of delay, still more so when we beheld the blue sky above, and the bright sun which shone on the deck; and with a general belief which so many have, that the Mediterranean Sea could not be rough. We had rather urged the captain to depart, spite, I fancy, of his better judgment; if so, we were well punished, inasmuch as, to use a vulgar term, his "dander was now up," and retreat there was none. The vessel's course was shaped for Marseilles, and fearful was the day and night we endured; now the whole deck was washed fore and aft by the mountainous waves, now the light masts bent as if nothing could prevent their fall; the funnels shivering and shaking in the howling winds. Still we held our way securely, making,

however, only three knots an hour. At length dark night closed over us, and at midnight we retired to our cabins, in the hope that the morning would break on a calmer sea. At two A.M., after several fierce encounters with the waves, the whole, or at least a greater part, of the ornamental gimcracks of the saloon flew in every direction, and every passenger jumped from his berth, all in various costumes, and some in little costume at all, peeped forth their heads with various questions, — "Have we struck?" — "Is she filling?" — "What is the matter?" and similar agreeable questions at two A.M., on a pitch-dark night, in a cranky steamer, and in a high gale on the calm, dark azure Mediterranean. A sort of lull—or a comparative lull—took place after this fierce encounter with the waves; and I, for one, slept soundly till four A.M., when I was aroused from feverish dreams by the entrance of one of the stewards of the ship. "Monsieur Sayah, Monsieur Sayah, nous allons arriver tout-à-l'heure." My first exclamation to myself was,

— "Thanks be to God for all his mercies!" and then spoke,—"Arrived at Marseilles! what happiness!" On which he replied,—"Non, non, monsieur, vous vous trompez; nous allons nous mouiller à Ajaccio." The truth was out: the shock we all experienced at two A.M. was simply occasioned by bad seamanship in wearing the vessel to the wind, in which manœuvre the heavy seas had struck and pooped her. Throughout the night we had scarcely made headway a league,—the helm would not answer.

The sea had mastered us. I jumped forthwith from the pigeon-hole in which I had passed some miserable hours of the night, and having dressed as people do dress on such occasions, rushed on deck. What a scene was there! Not a dry inch on the decks fore or aft,—a heavy boiling sea rolling behind us, and appearing each moment as if it would overwhelm us; a dark and leaden sky above,—anxious groups standing around; more anxious, more worn and pale, than ever they had been when under the fire of the

enemy at the seat of war, from which they had recently come. Before us appeared a high and magnificent snow-clad mountain; and on each side, within a mile, the wild yet picturesque scenery of Corsica. We had entered the Straits of Ajaccio, and another hour beheld us harboured in its calm and sheltered harbour; and thus, on the principle that there is no wind but that blows some good, I was permitted to visit that interesting locality.

If Ajaccio had no other attraction but the house in which Napoleon I. was born, and the garden in which, in early life, he was wont to play the soldier, it would be worthy of a visit. In my humble opinion, the scenery by which the town is surrounded and the bay are charming; and the town itself is by no means unattractive. With regard to Napoleon's early home, it has been so frequently described, that I need scarcely dwell on it here. Enough that his illustrious nephew has secured the property; and I was given to understand that he purposed pulling down several houses by which it is at present

surrounded, and opening it to the general view of the inhabitants. Having carefully visited every room—an impossibility without intense interest—I received through the courtesy of an old soldier, who showed me the house, various cuttings from some geraniums and other flowers which grew on a sort of stone terrace without the principal apartment, many of which are now flourishing plants at the home of my heart. True, they were only geraniums, and for the most part of the most common order; but they are geraniums from the birthplace of Napoleon I., and I fancy few possess their fellows. I have since purloined some cuttings from the garden of Prince Menschikoff at Buyukdere, now undergoing a similar process of cultivation.

Ajaccio itself is a remarkably clean, pleasant little town; and, as I have already said, the neighbourhood is charming: the view from the spot, or Grotto, where history tells us Napoleon was wont to play the artillery soldier, is one that may vie, and more than vie, with any I have be-

held in the East; and an avenue of orange-trees adorns the principal street, which, when in full flower, or brilliant with golden fruit, is unsurpassed in its peculiar size and beauty, the trees themselves being higher and larger in the stem than those of the Tuilleries or Versailles. Altogether, Ajaccio is a very pleasant abiding-place for a season. I have subsequently visited the eastern shores of Corsica, and also the town of Bastia; and the more I have seen, the more surprised am I that so few of my wandering fellow-countrymen, who visit all places on the wide earth, should leave their footprints there. Unfortunately, for very just reasons, sporting is, for a period, prohibited; otherwise Corsica offers to the sportsman attractions of the highest order: every species of game may be found there in abundance; including the red-deer, the roebuck, and the wild-boar. Easy access is obtained every two or three days from Leghorn, Genoa, and Elba, by steam to Bastia; and a weekly or twice-weekly mail-steamer plies between Marseilles and Ajaccio.

The Island of Elba is at hand, another source of interest; as is that of Monte Cristo, made so by the writings of Dumas. Moreover, the interior of the island abounds in fine scenery, and beautiful spots of varied and unequal woodland scenery, including the walnut, sweet chestnut, orange, evergreen oak, in size rarely equalled elsewhere.

Sevastopol, the stronghold of despotism in the East, has now fallen. The Crimean army of the invincible Czar is routed, demoralised, and driven from the protection of those walls it so long and so marvellously defended. The events that must follow at this hour are known alone to God. Man has no power to see through the dark cloud which overhangs the fate of Europe.

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